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SIDE LIGHTS  
ON AMERICAN HISTORY



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ON  
AMERICAN HISTORY

BY

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SERIES II

*THE CIVIL WAR AND OUR OWN TIMES*



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## PREFACE

THE cordial reception by the public of the first series of "Side Lights on American History," published a year ago, has been very gratifying to the author, and has far surpassed his expectations. The press notices also have been uniformly commendatory, many making special reference to the literary style. These facts have greatly encouraged the author in preparing the present volume, which, it is hoped, will be received with equal favor.

This volume begins where its predecessor left off, and covers the period of the Civil War and that which follows on to the present time. The original plan of choosing out the chief events, without attempting to give a complete history, has been followed, the object being to turn a flash-light here and there on the part that may be taken as a fair sample of the whole.

The author realizes the extreme difficulty in writing recent history. It is not want of material, but the necessity of dealing with living political issues without revealing a partisan bias, that constitutes the difficulty. Nor is it possible to weigh contemporary events and give them their true and final historic value; this must be left to the critical historian of the future.

If, however, these side lights on our history shall stimulate the reader to further research, and shall give him a broader conception of, and a deeper love for, our great country and its institutions, the writer will feel amply repaid.

H. W. E.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.,

May, 1900.

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SIDE LIGHTS  
ON AMERICAN HISTORY







# SIDE LIGHTS ON AMERICAN HISTORY

## CHAPTER I

### THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1860

#### *The Political Situation*

THE Democratic party had enjoyed a long lease of power—unbroken for sixty years, except for the two successful Whig campaigns in the forties; but as the presidential election of 1860 drew near, a general conviction took possession of the public mind that a great political revolution was at hand. The rapid rise of the Republican party had seriously threatened Democratic supremacy in 1856; but the personal integrity of Mr. Buchanan, coupled with the fact that his residing in England during the preceding four years had left his name untainted with Kansas-Nebraskaism, had secured to the Democrats one more national victory. But the axe was laid at the root of the tree.

Yet, so great was the vitality of the party, and so deep-seated its hold upon the people, that it might have survived the odium of the Kansas-Nebraska Law and of the Dred Scott decision, had it not been for quarrels that followed within its own household. The President, in disregard of public feeling at the North, urged upon Congress the admission of Kansas into the Union under the infamous Lecompton Constitution.<sup>1</sup> He thus incurred the open hostility of Senator Douglas, who successfully resisted the passage of the measure.

The Republicans were not slow to profit by the dissensions of the Democrats. Thousands of Democrats, lukewarm after the Kansas-Nebraska Act, but still clinging to the party of their fathers, were now exasperated beyond endurance by the position of Mr. Buchanan, and were warmly welcomed within the Republican fold. The signs of the times, indeed, seemed

<sup>1</sup> The Lecompton Constitution was framed by the proslavery party at Lecompton, Kansas, in September, 1857. This Constitution, which was not submitted to a fair vote of the people, sanctioned slavery in Kansas and forbade the passage of emancipation laws by the legislature. Many of the members that framed the Constitution had been elected by fraudulent means.

to point to a Republican victory in the great contest of 1860, yet this would scarcely have been possible but for the fatal split in the Democratic party, which we must now consider.

### *The Democratic Convention*

The National Democratic Convention met in April, 1860, at Charleston, South Carolina, for the purpose of adopting a platform of principles and of nominating candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency. The party was not harmonious. The fraternal feeling between the two sections that had prevailed eight years before at the nomination of Pierce, and four years before when Buchanan became the standard-bearer, was now wholly wanting. The condition of the Democratic party was now very similar to that of the Whigs when they entered on their last national campaign in 1852; and the rock on which the Whig party had been dashed to pieces was the same that now threatened the Democracy.

The Charleston convention was called to order, and Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts was made permanent chairman. Cushing was a

lawyer of great learning and experience. It is said that he could converse with almost any foreign minister in Washington in the latter's own language. He had been a member of Congress as a Whig away back in the thirties, was later in the cabinet of Tyler and minister to China. On his return to the United States, he joined the Democratic party, served through the Mexican War, was four years in the cabinet of Franklin Pierce, and was now in full sympathy with the extreme proslavery sentiment of the South. The selection of Cushing was the first victory of the South. There were thirty-three States in the Union at that time; and the fifteen slave States, joined by the delegates from two of the free States, California and Oregon, had control of the committees and were thus enabled to name the chairman and to frame the platform. The free States, however, owing to their greater population, had a majority in convention, and that body was not obliged to accept the platform as it came from the majority of the committee.

The great battle was now fairly under way

—a battle that was to rend the party in twain. The one vital point on which the combatants could not agree was slavery in the Territories. The South demanded that Congress protect slavery in the Territories against all unfriendly local legislation, while the northern delegates, in accordance with the view of their constituents, took the ground that each Territory should control the matter for itself, and decide whether slavery should exist within its bounds. This doctrine was known as "Squatter Sovereignty," and Stephen A. Douglas was its author. Douglas, who, by his brave stand against the Lecompton Constitution, had regained much of the popularity lost by means of his Kansas-Nebraska Bill, was now again the Democratic idol of the North and the choice of that section for the presidency. But he had paid dearly for his re-won laurels; he had sacrificed his popularity in the entire South, and almost all the delegates from the slave States opposed his nomination.

Before balloting for candidates, however, it was necessary to decide upon a platform. The committee, after a serious struggle of several

days, was unable to agree, and the result was two platforms brought before the convention. The position of the slave States was eloquently set forth by Mr. Yancey of Alabama, the most famous orator of the South. In vain did the northern delegates declare that the party could not carry a northern State, if they yielded to the demands of the South concerning slavery in the Territories. They were willing, however, to yield their squatter sovereignty plank, and to leave the matter of slavery in the Territories to the decision of the courts. But the South was inflexible, and an agreement was impossible. When the convention balloted, the Douglas platform as reported by the minority of the committee was adopted by a majority of 27 on a total vote of 303.

The next great act in the drama immediately followed. The chairman of the Alabama delegation now arose and announced that the delegates from that State, as instructed by their constituents, would withdraw from the convention. This action was followed by the withdrawal of the delegates from Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Florida, and Arkan-



sas. The moment was a portentous and solemn one. Men looked at each other with tears in their eyes,<sup>1</sup> as much as to say, this is the fatal step, not only toward the disruption of the party, but toward the dissolution of the Union.

After the secession of the southern delegates the convention adopted the two-thirds rule and began balloting for a presidential candidate. Douglas led all other candidates from the start. On several ballots he received more than a majority of the votes, but always fell below the necessary two-thirds. On May the 3d, after fifty-seven fruitless ballots had been cast, the convention adjourned to meet on June the 18th, in Baltimore, while the seceding faction decided to meet at Richmond, Virginia.

The adjourned convention met at the appointed time and place. Six weeks had elapsed since the Charleston convention had broken up in disorder, and the Republicans had met in the meantime and placed their candidates before the country. The strongest

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, Vol. II. p. 451.

days were spent in preparing and adopting a platform of principles, and on the morning of the third the balloting began.

There was no lack of candidates, the most prominent being William H. Seward of New York, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, and Edward Bates of Missouri. Next to these stood Salmon P. Chase of Ohio and Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania; but neither of these expected the nomination, nor were they seriously considered outside their respective States.

The one candidate far in the lead of all others was Mr. Seward. For many years Seward had been the great northern exponent of the principles on which the Republican party was founded. Before the party was born, he had stood in the forefront of the battle and had contended with singular courage in the National Senate and from the public platform for what he believed to be right in the government of the Nation. The general belief on all sides was that the nomination of Seward was assured. Even his opponents on the evening before the balloting began telegraphed their friends at home their



fear that the selection of Seward on the morrow was inevitable.

But there were powerful forces working against Seward. He had been too long in public life not to have made enemies. He was the author of the "higher law" doctrine, and he had used the expression "irrepressible conflict" in speaking of the strife between the North and the South on the slavery question. He was looked upon as the chief of the radicals representing northern thought, and on this account many conservatives hesitated to follow him. Moreover, Seward, when governor of New York, had offended many of the Know-Nothings on the school question. The Know-Nothing or American party had now dissolved, most of its members had joined the Republicans, but they still held resentment against Seward, and it was feared that he would not be able to command their votes. These were the formidable obstacles in the way of Seward's nomination at Chicago.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Curtin, the nominee of the Republicans for governor of Pennsylvania, called the People's party in that State, Alexander K. McClure of the same state, and Henry S. Lane,

The next important candidate was Abraham Lincoln. As a National figure, it is true, he was no match for Seward; but after his memorable debate with Douglas in 1858, his star had steadily risen until now it shone with a brilliancy in the political firmament second only to that of the great New Yorker. Lincoln's Cooper Union speech in New York City the preceding winter had done much to bring him before the public and had won many friends, among whom was the venerable journalist and poet, William Cullen Bryant.

The people of Illinois were in serious earnest in their efforts to secure the nomination of Lincoln. The week before the convention met, the State convention at Decatur had named him as their first and only choice for President. One of his friends had there marched through the crowd bearing on his

nominee for governor of Indiana, all leading spirits of the convention, declared that Seward could not carry their respective States in the election, and they did all in their power to compass his defeat. So also did Horace Greeley, whose compact with Seward and Weed had been dissolved some years before. Seward's canvass was conducted by that unrivalled political manager from New York, Thurlow Weed.

shoulder two rails on which was inscribed :  
"From a lot made by Abraham Lincoln and John Hanks in the Sangamon bottom in the year 1830." Henceforth, Lincoln was often called the rail-splitter, and the shouts now at Chicago for "honest old Abe, the rail-splitter" were loud and long.

Bates was also a man of National reputation ; but it was not his personality nor his popularity that made him a possible candidate before the convention. It was rather the fact that he represented a slave State, and his selection would have done much toward weakening the most serious charge made against the Republican party—that of being a sectional party. Bates was supported by the *New York Tribune* and its famous editor, Horace Greeley.

The shouting for Lincoln on the moving of the first ballot was wild and enthusiastic. His managers had employed two men whose vocal powers were so great that their shouts, it is said, could be heard above the most violent storm. These two men, one of whom was a Democrat, were hired to sit in the

gallery and lead the shouting for the Illinois candidate. As the ballot proceeded the excitement became intense. When the votes were counted, it was found that Seward had led with  $173\frac{1}{2}$  votes; Lincoln had 102; Cameron following with  $50\frac{1}{2}$ , while Chase received 49 and Bates 48. There was no nomination, as it required 233 votes to make a choice. Cameron's name was now withdrawn, and on the second ballot many of the scattering votes were gathered in by the two leading candidates. Lincoln gained far more rapidly than Seward, and was found to be but  $2\frac{1}{2}$  votes behind the New Yorker when the result was announced. But still there was no nomination, and it was now decided to adjourn until the next day.

Chicago during that night was a roaring, seething mass of humanity. In the early morning hours of the following day the Seward party made an imposing street demonstration led by a band in bright uniform. While this was in progress the Lincoln party stole a march by filling the galleries of the wigwam with followers of the rail-splitter, with the result that

when the Seward shouters came they found the place well filled and few of them could gain admittance. As the third ballot progressed the excitement grew in intensity, for it was felt that this would be the final and deciding vote. Cheer on cheer reëchoed through the great hall as one State after another recorded its vote for either of the two leading candidates. The confusion was indescribable as the rail-splitter steadily gained on the New York statesman, passed him, and finally came within  $1\frac{1}{2}$  votes of the great prize. Then for a moment the vast assemblage held its breath as a delegate from Ohio rose and announced the change of 4 votes from that State from Chase to Lincoln, thus giving him the nomination. But the silence was only for a moment, when there broke forth such terrific thunders of applause that the boom of cannon, announcing the event from the top of the building, could scarcely be heard inside.<sup>1</sup> The news of the nomination soon spread through the streets of the city; a hundred guns were fired from the top of the Fremont House; processions of men bearing

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, Vol. II. p. 471.

rails in honor of "Old Abe" were formed on all sides, and indeed the whole city gave itself up to one long exultant shout of joy. The news was telegraphed to Lincoln at his office in Springfield. When informed of the work of the convention, he remarked, "There is a little woman at our house that would be glad to hear this; I'll go and tell her."

Outside of Illinois and a few adjacent States the nomination of Lincoln created little enthusiasm in the party. The general feeling was one of disappointment. Seward had been looked upon as the coming man, and his followers were deeply mortified when he was set aside. Nevertheless many of the common people rejoiced at the selection of the rail-splitter, nor was he without warm supporters among the leaders. Senator Douglas, his great antagonist, exclaimed to a group of Republican senators, "Gentlemen, you have nominated a very able and a very honest man."

### *The Platforms*

The chief issue in the presidential election of 1860 was the same that had held the attention of the country for several years past, the same



that had been dominant in the famous joint debates between Lincoln and Douglas — slavery in the Territories. The enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Law and the different interpretations it received north and south of Mason and Dixon's line had placed this question foremost in the public mind; but in the campaign of 1856 the issue was less prominent than now. The South had not then made demands on the northern Democrats to which the latter could not yield, and the party had presented a united front to the enemy. But now the party was rent into two great factions, and the issue between the factions was the same as that between each of them and the Republicans — slavery in the Territories.

The following are the three positions adapted from Greeley: The Republicans took the ground that slavery is a political and moral evil; that it can exist only where protected by law; that there is no law for it in the Territories, nor is there any power to enact one, and that Congress is not only without the power to protect slavery in Territories, but is bound to prohibit it.

The Breckenridge Democrats represented the opposite extreme, taking the ground that, as the Constitution recognizes property in slaves, Congress is bound to protect such property in all public lands; that any slave owner may migrate into any United States territory and take his human property with him, nor has the people or the territorial legislature any right to exclude slavery by unfriendly laws.

The Douglas Democrats took the middle ground that Congress had absolutely nothing to do with the matter; that the people of a Territory have the sole right to decide the question for themselves; that slavery or no slavery within the bounds of any Territory must be left to a majority of the white citizens.

The fourth party, that led by Bell and Everett, did not announce its position on the all-important question. It simply pronounced for the Constitution, the Union, and the enforcement of the laws, which meant "anything in general and nothing in particular."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Greeley's "American Conflict," Vol. I. p. 322.



*The Campaign*

The presidential campaign of 1860 was one of singular importance, owing to the one great question that was to be decided by the election ; but the excitement was not so great as in some preceding National contests, owing to the quadrilateral character of political parties and to the fact that the main issue had already been before the people for several years and much of the campaign fire burned out. It was an intellectual battle, the personality of the candidate not entering greatly into it. The most striking figure of the campaign was that of Douglas, who spoke in many of the States and infused something of his own fiery energy into the canvass. But Douglas, with all his eloquence, could not stem the tide against him. He could hope for little support from the South, and the mind of the North was steadily turned toward the rail-splitter. But the personality of Lincoln was not a great attraction to the Republicans, though it is true that he grew in public favor as the canvass proceeded. He made no speeches, but remained quietly at his rooms in

the State House at Springfield, directing affairs and attending his voluminous correspondence.

Seward did not sulk in his tent on account of his defeat at Chicago. He manfully entered the contest and spoke for Lincoln in many cities. This action of Seward won him a greater degree of popularity than he had ever before enjoyed. "His magnanimity," said James Russell Lowell, "was a greater ornament than his election to the presidency would have been."

The campaign was eminently a sectional one. Douglas alone had a following in every State.<sup>1</sup> Lincoln had no support in the South, except in a few of the border States, while Breckenridge was scarcely mentioned in the Northwest nor in New England.<sup>2</sup> The southern cry that Lincoln was a sectional candidate could have been answered by the statement that Breckenridge was no less so. The poets, Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, and also George William Curtis, Henry Ward Beecher, and many other

<sup>1</sup> There was no Douglas ticket in Texas, and in South Carolina the electors were chosen by the legislature.

<sup>2</sup> Breckenridge had some following in Connecticut, and in most northern States he received a few scattering votes.

representative men were arrayed on the side of Lincoln. There was a large Union party in the South who voted for Bell and Everett, while the Breckenridge party openly avowed that, if Lincoln were elected, disunion would inevitably follow. Douglas and Bell both expressed their gravest fears that Lincoln's election would result in secession, but the Lincoln people professed to believe no such thing.

Speculations were rife as to the probable outcome of the battle. Breckenridge could not hope to carry any of the free States, and the unanimous vote of the slave States could not elect him, hence his election was impossible. Douglas made a heroic fight, but he was not the first choice of the people either north or south of Mason and Dixon's line. The remaining contingents were, the election of Lincoln, or a failure to elect, which would throw the choosing of a President into the House of Representatives. Lincoln could hope for nothing from the House, as that body was not under the control of the Republicans. The Democratic majority, however, was hopelessly divided, and had it devolved on them to choose a chief magistrate, there

would doubtless have been a deadlock. But the Lincoln supporters were sanguine of carrying the election, and to do this it was necessary to secure the votes of two or more of the northern States which Fremont had failed to carry in the preceding National struggle, viz. New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, and California. Of those Mr. Lincoln was morally sure of carrying Illinois; but two others, including Pennsylvania or three without that State, were also needed.

Had the Douglas and Breckenridge parties united on a compromise platform at any time during the summer or early autumn, it might still have been possible to defeat Lincoln; but not so after the October elections in a few northern States. Of the October States Pennsylvania had attracted most attention; and when the Lincoln party carried the State and elected Mr. Curtin governor by a majority above thirty-two thousand, the last hope of successful opposition was crushed. The election of Lincoln was assured. Next to the election of their own candidate, the extreme pro-slavery party of the South desired the election of the Republican

candidate; for the success of Douglas, they said, would leave their section in a still divided condition, while the success of Lincoln would unite the people of the South against the North and furnish them with an adequate pretext for seceding from the Union.<sup>1</sup>

The great presidential battle was fought on November 6, and some hours before midnight it was known through the country that Abraham Lincoln had been chosen by the people as Chief Magistrate. A few days later it was found that all the free States, except New Jersey, had cast their votes for the rail-splitter, and owing to a miscarriage of attempted fusion in New Jersey, he received four electoral votes from that State, giving him in all 180, while but 152 were needed to elect. The electoral college gave Breckenridge 72, while Bell captured three of the slave States, — Virginia, Kentucky, and his own State, Tennessee, which gave him a total vote of 39. Douglas received a much higher popular vote than Breckenridge or Bell, but his electoral vote was ridiculously small. He carried Missouri by a narrow margin over Bell, receiving the 9 votes

<sup>1</sup>Greeley, Vol. I. p. 329.

of that State and but 3 besides—from New Jersey. Lincoln's popular vote was the largest of all, but he fell considerably short of receiving a majority over all.

The political revolution of 1860 was one of vast importance, its only parallel in our history being that of 1800, when Thomas Jefferson was elected over John Adams. The meaning of Lincoln's election was not difficult to understand: it announced to the world that the people of the North had decided that the institution of slavery should extend no farther on free soil.



## CHAPTER II

### SECESSION

To relate in a general way the story of the secession of the eleven slave States which brought on the Civil War would be to give the reader facts too familiar to be interesting, while a detailed account of the same would be too unimportant to be instructive. Let us therefore devote the larger part of this chapter to a brief account of the history of the secession idea, the spirit of disunion, from the beginning of the Federal Government down to its culmination in the sixties.

When men enter into any great or unusual political movement they must have a pretext, a ground on which to base their action, if they would command the respect of any considerable portion of their fellow-men. And the South based its right to secede from the Union, not simply on the right of revolution, which for adequate cause is inherent in all peoples, but on

the ground of State Sovereignty, usually mis-named States' Rights.

*State Sovereignty in Theory*

The doctrine of State Sovereignty is older than the Constitution of the United States, and it was held by a large portion of the people for nearly a century — until the question was settled negatively by the Civil War. It is simply the theory that the colonies, on gaining their independence from England, became independent and sovereign States; that in ratifying the Constitution they voluntarily joined the Union for mutual benefit, and that each retained to itself all the essence of sovereignty. This, of course, includes the right of secession. There is much documentary support to this theory in our early records. The States again and again declared themselves sovereign. The State constitutions formed during the Revolutionary period generally avowed this theory. In that of Massachusetts, adopted in 1780, we find this, "The people of this commonwealth have the sole and exclusive right of governing themselves as a free, sovereign, and independent



State." Similar statements are found in the early constitutions of New York, South Carolina, and of other States.

The articles of Confederation declare that "Each State retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence." The treaty of peace of 1783 with England recognized, not the nation as a whole, but the several states as "free, sovereign and independent," giving the name of each.

All our early political writings, including the Federal Constitution, speak of the United States in the plural and seldom or never as a unit, a nation.

Hundreds of citations similar to the above might be adduced to show that the creed of State Sovereignty was widely accepted. After the organization of the Federal Government these expressions became less common, but by no means did they die out. Nor were they confined to the South. As late as 1859 the legislature of Wisconsin, nettled at a Supreme Court decision against the personal liberty law of that State, gave vent to its feeling in the following words, "The several States which

formed that instrument (the Constitution) being sovereign and independent, have the unquestionable right to judge of its infractions." Throughout the long struggle between the National idea and State Sovereignty, covering the period between 1789 and the Civil War, there was scarcely a State in the Union that did not, at some time, declare its own sovereignty. This claim grew less serious in the North, during this period, while the South seized upon it as the most available weapon in battling for the rights of slavery.

On the other hand, the expressions against State Sovereignty are equally positive and almost as numerous as those in favor of it. Let us cite a few from the earlier period.

The Declaration of Independence is an expression of the whole people through their representatives, and no notice is taken of the separate States. This was obviously the voice of a united people, a nation. Charles C. Pinckney, a signer and one of the foremost men of the time, said that, "The separate independence and sovereignty of the several States was never thought of by the patriots who framed the Dec-

laration of Independence; the States are not even mentioned by name in any part of it." The Constitution begins, not with "We the States," nor with "We the people of the States," but with "We the people of the United States." This form of words embodies the National idea, and its adoption was strongly opposed by the States' Rights party in the convention. Many other examples might be given to show that the idea of nationality, of "the Union, one and inseparable," was not new in 1830 when Webster made his great speech in the Senate.

### *State Sovereignty in Practice*

Again and again, during the first half-century of our national history, the States declared themselves sovereign. It was heard from the public platform, from State legislatures, and voiced in the State constitutions. If declarations and resolutions alone were sufficient to establish the sovereignty of the States, their separate independence from the first could not be denied; but mere resolutions are of little weight when it comes to dealing with actual facts. As Alexander Johnson says, it is like

the protests of a drowning man in the midst of a resistless current. His declarations that he will not drown can hardly save him without the added exertion of swimming.

In point of fact, the States are not and have never been sovereign. The Nation may calmly ignore the multitude of resolutions as long as they are confined to theory; but any attempt to enforce them would speedily be crushed. No State has ever exercised the prerogatives of sovereignty. No State except Texas has ever been recognized by the nations as an independent power; no State has sent or received an ambassador, made a treaty, waged war, or concluded a peace.<sup>1</sup>

No State has been able to stand alone, though several have had the opportunity to try. At the outbreak of the Revolution the rupture was between England and a single colony, — Massachusetts; and while that colony bravely faced the issue, she at the same time called frantically upon her sister colonies for help. When our Federal Government was organized

<sup>1</sup> Lalor's "Cyclopedia of Political and Social Science," Vol. III. p. 794.

in 1789 two States, Rhode Island and North Carolina, failing to ratify the Constitution, remained out of the Union for a time; but in less than two years both had joined it, thus confessing their inability to stand alone. South Carolina was on the verge of secession in 1832, but, receiving no support from the other States, she soon settled back into her rightful place. Even in 1861 the seceding States did not attempt to remain separate and independent powers. They immediately banded together in a confederacy.

But the most conclusive and unanswerable argument against State Sovereignty is, not only that the Federal Constitution forbids the exercise of sovereign powers to the States, but especially the fact that the Constitution is subject to almost unlimited amendment without the consent of any particular State.<sup>1</sup> The people of a State may be unanimously opposed to any particular amendment, which may nevertheless be adopted and become binding on that State. When a nation as a whole has such power over its several parts, it is idle and

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 796.

absurd to attribute sovereignty to any of the parts.<sup>1</sup>

True sovereignty in the United States rests, not with the States, nor even with the Federal Government, but with the people of the nation. The National will, humanly speaking, is absolutely supreme. It is above all laws, congresses, courts, and constitutions, and can change them at its pleasure. The National will alone is sovereign. But the voice of the Nation is seldom heard except through the ordinary channels of law. It is only some great emergency, as the adoption of the Constitution, or the Civil War, that brings forth an extra expression of the National will, and at such times the sound is indescribably vast.

### *Early Threats of Disunion*

Scarcely had our National Government been organized when threats of secession and disunion

<sup>1</sup> The reader should carefully distinguish between State Sovereignty and States' Rights. No one denies the existence of the latter. It is necessary to our form of government ; but for many years before the war the term was misused until it almost lost its true signification. See "Side Lights," Vol. I. p. 384.



were first heard, and from that time to the Civil War not a decade passed in which the same cry was not renewed. From the Congressional halls, from the public platform, and through the press the threat of dismembering the Union has been reiterated over and over again. Sometimes this disunion fever took the milder form of simple prediction that the Union could endure but a short time, at other times it would break forth in the wildest and most intemperate threats of secession from the disappointed and the aggrieved. Only a few of the more notable examples can here be given.

Some years after the Government had been organized, Elbridge Gerry, one of the framers of the Constitution and afterward Vice-President, pronounced the Republic a failure and openly predicted that it could not long continue. Scores of similar expressions were heard from members of Congress and other public men, but it was left for the Louisiana Purchase to call forth the first serious threats of disunion. The old New England Federalists sternly resisted the acquisition of the new territory. New England, they claimed, will be rendered powerless

when a dozen or more new States peopled with the wild men of Missouri shall be added to the Union. The Constitution was made only for the original territory of the United States; the act is therefore unconditional and void. In January, 1811, when the bill to admit Louisiana as a State into the Union was debated in Congress, Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts spoke as follows, "It is my deliberate opinion, that, if this bill passes, the bonds of this Union are virtually dissolved; that the States which compose it are free from their moral obligations; and that, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, to prepare definitely for a separation, amicably if they can, forcibly if they must."

The embargo of President Jefferson was another source from which the disunion spirit emanated. The embargo became so unpopular in commercial New England that the Federal leaders decided to break it, and to withdraw the New England States from the Union, if the Government attempted to use force. It was also broadly rumored that unofficial negotiations had already begun toward securing British aid in breaking up the Union.



The War of 1812 furnished another occasion for a serious menace to hover over the Union, and again it was New England that was disaffected. When the first call to arms was issued, the governors of three New England States, — Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, — defied the Government and refused to send soldiers. As the war progressed the Federalists continued their opposition, and, there is every reason to believe, connived with the enemy with a view of separating New England from the rest of the Union. This feeling had its culmination in the Hartford Convention of 1814; but peace was at hand, and all unpatriotic intrigues came to naught.

The decade following the Treaty of Ghent of 1814, which included the "era of good feeling," may be pronounced the first period of real prosperity in the history of the United States. For the first time the country was comparatively free from foreign annoyance; the stream of foreign immigration began its ceaseless flow unto our shores; the eyes of the world could no longer be blinded to the fact that America was a rising giant and demanded their respect; and above

all, the American people were filled with hopefulness for the future of the nation as never before since the closing years of the Revolution.

During this period there was no serious menace to the integrity of the Union. The reptile secession lay dormant for more than fifteen years, when it again showed its hideous form in the nullification movement of South Carolina. It is true that nullification and secession are not identical, but they are very nearly related, and the former necessarily leads to the latter. While nullification in South Carolina did not reach the acute stage of secession, it bears the distinction of being the first movement in that direction which resulted in official overt acts.

All subsequent threats of secession are inseparably linked with the institution of slavery and they are invariably brought forth under the shield of State Sovereignty. In the early forties when the Texas question absorbed public attention, the free-soil Whigs heartily opposed annexation because of their hostility to extending slave territory. And even so conservative a statesman as John Quincy Adams, in an address to his constituents, stated that annex-

ation "would result in, and fully justify, a dissolution of the Union."

William Lloyd Garrison, at an anti-annexation meeting in Boston, moved that Massachusetts call a convention to declare the Union dissolved and to invite other States to join with her in a new union based on the principles of the Declaration of Independence. His motion was not carried, but it received vigorous applause.

It was from the South, however, that the most serious menaces were heard. Calhoun was for many years the great champion of the rights of slavery, and while he was sincerely devoted to the Union, he warned the northern people again and again that, unless they ceased to encroach upon the rights of the slaveholders, the inevitable result must be a dissolution of the Union. In his last great speech in the Senate, March, 1850, he pointed out how the political and social ties between the North and the South had been severed, how the leading religious bodies were being divided in twain, and how one cord after another that bound the sections together would snap until

nothing was left, and a final separation must inevitably follow.

In January, 1849, a caucus of southern members of Congress met and issued an address declaring that the South ought to secede rather than submit to the Wilmot Proviso.<sup>1</sup> Still greater was the menace to the Union in 1850, when California sought admission as a free State. Early in the year Henry Clay came forward with his compromise measures (known as the Omnibus Bill) one of which was to admit California as a free State. This measure was deeply offensive to the people of the South. They had fondly hoped that the princely domain won from Mexico in the recent war would eventually be carved into slave States, and now to have the fairest portion forever snatched from their grasp was enough, as they thought, to fire the southern heart to renewed threats of destroying the Union.<sup>2</sup> From all quarters came the threat — from the governors of the States down to the petty politician — to secede from the Union,

<sup>1</sup> Schouler, Vol. V. p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> "Side Lights," Vol. I. Chap. XIII.

if California were not divided and the southern half made a slave State. The correspondence of the southern governors bristles with reference to muskets, field-pieces, and foundries. A convention of southern leaders met at Nashville, and by a two-thirds vote decided that any State had the right to secede from the Union. Not one little State, as in 1832, but almost the entire South seemed on the verge of taking the fatal step. Had secession been accomplished at this time on so large a scale as that of ten years later, what might have been the result? Jackson was in his grave, and Lincoln was unknown, nor was there any great political party pledged to the maintenance of our National integrity.

Had the secession of the sixties occurred ten years earlier, there is little doubt that our glorious Union must have perished. But milder counsels prevailed. The South at length decided to accept the Omnibus Bill as a finality—California should come in as a free State without further protest—on condition that the North accept in good faith the Fugitive Slave Law. Thus for a season was

the inevitable rupture between the two sections postponed.

For several years, following this mid-century compromise, less was heard of disunion than during the preceding years; but in 1856 the leaders of the slave States openly avowed that the election of Fremont would result in secession. But the time had not yet come. The Providential Hand is plainly seen in averting the calamity. Fremont lacked the staying qualities necessary to put down the rising monster, nor was the new-born party he represented yet in condition to cope with so great an enemy. Fremont was defeated, and the dragon slumbered for four years more.

### *Secession of South Carolina*

The great secession movement in the sixties was composed of the separate acts of the several seceding States without any concerted official action, but with the tacit understanding, it is true, that the seceded States would join in a southern Confederacy. As a type of the methods of secession and of the spirit that produced it, let us note with some detail



the action of South Carolina, the State that began the movement which resulted in the greatest of civil wars.

A few days before the National election of November 6, 1860, Governor Gist of South Carolina convened the legislature in extra session for the purpose of choosing presidential electors.<sup>1</sup> In his message to that body the governor thus expresses himself: "I would earnestly recommend that in the event of Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency, a convention of the people of this State be immediately called to consider and determine for themselves the mode and measure of redress. . . . I am constrained to say that the only alternative left, in my judgment, is the secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union."

In writing this, the governor but voiced the opinion of a very large majority of the people of his State.

For some weeks before the national elec-

<sup>1</sup> South Carolina did not choose electors by popular vote until after the Civil War. The Constitution is silent as to the manner of choosing them.

tion, when it was practically certain that the Republican candidates would win, the people of South Carolina rejoiced at the prospect; for, in that event, they claimed, their State would have ample cause for separating from the Union. On the night of the election, when the news that a majority of Lincoln electors had been chosen reached Charleston, the crowds broke forth in cheers. Next morning, the city was aglow with enthusiasm. Men meeting in the street grasped each other's hands and expressed their unbounded joy at the glad tidings.<sup>1</sup> The happy day had at last come when they had sufficient grounds for secession. The North had elected a "Black Republican" President who openly declared slavery to be wrong. What other pretext could they desire? A palmetto and lone star flag was stretched across the street from the upper windows of the *Mercury*'s office, and was hailed with cheers and expressions of passionate attachment.<sup>2</sup> The people compared themselves to the people of Boston on the

<sup>1</sup> Greeley's "American Conflict," Vol. I. p. 332.

<sup>2</sup> Charleston *Mercury*, November 8.



eve of the Revolution. Still greater was the exultation of the people when a few days later the legislature passed a bill by a unanimous vote providing for a convention of the people of South Carolina to be held December the 7th for the purpose of considering the relations of the State with the northern States and the government of the United States.<sup>1</sup> The holding of great mass meetings, raising of liberty-poles, the singing of the *Marseillaise*, amid the booming of cannon, became the order of the day, and continued throughout the remaining autumn weeks.

These demonstrations were not the work of the rabble, but of the business men, the professional men, and the artisans—in short the solidest and best citizens of the State. The proceedings were usually opened with prayer, and a day was solemnly set apart by the legislature as a day of prayer. No one can doubt the sincerity of the people. They were honest in their belief that they had suffered from the aggressions of the North until they could endure it no longer.

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, Vol. III. p. 118.

The election of delegates to the secession convention took place on December 6. Without party division, the best men of the State were generally chosen. Many of them enjoyed a national reputation; five had been governors of the State, and many had been members of Congress. The condition of the people reached fever heat by the time the convention met. "The excitement of the great masses of the people is great under a sense of deep wrongs," wrote the newly elected Governor Pickens on the day of the first session. Business was paralyzed in all its branches, it is true, but the people were jubilant over their prospects of independence, as they expressed it, and few believed that the Government at Washington would attempt to coerce a State and preserve the Union by force.

The convention, driven from Columbia by an epidemic of the smallpox, met in St. Andrew's Hall, Charleston. The demeanor of the delegates was grave; they realized that the movement they were about to make was one of vast significance. But none hesitated or took a backward step. The "Declaration of Inde-

pendence," solemnly read to the assembly, began with these words: "We, the people of the State of South Carolina, in convention assembled, do declare and ordain . . . that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States under the name of 'The United States of America' is hereby dissolved." Not an hour passed after the reading of the declaration when the vote was taken, and the entire assembly, without a dissenting voice, voted in the affirmative. The scene in Charleston on that twentieth day of December, 1860, defies description. The session of the convention was held in secret, but the news of its action soon spread to the impatient multitudes that thronged the streets of the city, and the cheers that rent the air resembled those that had greeted the ringing of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia nearly a century before. Palmetto flags were hoisted in all parts of the city, all the church bells were rung, and the boom of cannon announced the glad tidings to the outlying sections. On the evening of that day the signing of the Ordinance of Secession by the members of

the convention that had passed it took place in the largest hall in the city. The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity. After a reverent invocation for the blessing of the Almighty God on the action of the State, the Ordinance of Secession was solemnly read to the multitude and signed by the members of the convention amid wild and unrestrained enthusiasm.

South Carolina had thus crossed the Rubicon, had taken the first step toward forming, as the people believed, a southern republic, which should make slavery, the stone which the builders rejected, the chief corner-stone. Little did the people realize at that moment what dreadful disasters would overtake their beloved State within the next few years. Little did they dream of the destruction of property, the desolation of their homes, the sacrifice of their loved ones, that their act would bring upon them. The world must condemn the cause in which they fought; but their devotion to that cause, their prowess on the battle-field, and their powers of endurance have marked them as true Americans, and must ever elicit the admiration of mankind.

## CHAPTER III

### GREAT LEADERS IN CONGRESS DURING THE WAR

THERE is a tradition among the Indians that the ancestors from which they sprung were a race of giants, of beings far superior to themselves. This tendency to idealize the heroes of the past is not confined to the red race. We are all to some extent affected by the enchantment lent by distance; we look to a past age for our models of heroism and of intellectual superiority. Our own country is still in its youth, and yet the times of its beginning seem like ancient times, and the statesmen and heroes of that day have been idealized in popular fancy until they have almost become demigods. Few realize that in later times, even in our own day, there may be found, here and there, a public man of patriotism as pure, and ability as great, as those of a century ago.

It is a curious fact that during the Revolutionary period there was but one man whose military record brought him great and enduring fame, while numerous are the great names from the field of legislation that are placed in the highest column of American celebrities. On the other hand, the Civil War brought out several great military leaders, but only one from civil life whose achievements brought him immortal renown.<sup>1</sup>

In our heaping honors on the great war President and the leading commanders in the field, we are apt to forget to give due honor to the memory of those secondary lights who shaped the vast work of Congress during that

<sup>1</sup> Washington stands without a second as the military leader of the Revolution. Greene and Lafayette, who come next, must be classed far below him. But Franklin, Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and John and Samuel Adams are all among the first-rank heroes in the popular mind. The Civil War gave us Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, and Farragut, closely seconded by Meade and Thomas, and, if we include the other side, Lee and Jackson. But outside the battle-field Lincoln stands grandly alone. Other great names we have : there were Seward, Sumner, Chase, Fessenden, Wade, and Stevens ; but most of them had reached their acme of fame before the war, and none of the galaxy are classed in popular fancy as stars of the first magnitude.



memorable period. To a notice of a few of these this chapter will be devoted. But first let us give a passing glance at a few of the

*Leading Spirits of the South.*

Among the leading statesmen who resigned their seats in Congress to cast their lot with the South, Jefferson Davis stands foremost. Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, the great opposing chieftains during the war, were born in the same State, but a year apart. Both left their native State in early life, the one drifting northward and absorbing the free soil sentiments of his adopted section until it became the guiding principle of his life; the other, migrating in the opposite direction, made his home in Mississippi, espoused the cause of the slaveholder, and rose in public life until he became the recognized leader of the far-famed aristocracy of the South. What might have been the effect on our history had the direction of the migrating of these two been reversed, we can only conjecture. Certain it is that environment has much to do in shaping a man's course and moulding his destiny.

Jefferson Davis was graduated at West Point at the age of twenty. He saw service in the Black Hawk War and was sent to Congress from Mississippi in 1845. On making his first speech in the House the venerable John Quincy Adams is said to have exclaimed, "That young man will yet make his mark in American history." Davis resigned his seat in Congress and became a colonel in the Mexican War, where he served under his father-in-law, Zachary Taylor, and showed himself a brave soldier at Monterey and Buena Vista. This experience won for him an election to the United States Senate, in which he served continuously to the Civil War, with the exception of the four years he spent as secretary of war in the cabinet of Franklin Pierce.

On the death of the great Calhoun, who had for many years shaped at his will the political conscience of the South, Davis became his successor and heir to his political fortunes; but it must be added that Davis never won the southern heart as Calhoun had done. His career, nevertheless, was a notable one and his success unbroken (save a defeat for the governorship



of his State) until the Civil War. When the seceding States joined together in a confederation, Davis was easily chosen to preside at the helm of the newly launched vessel. The choice seemed to be a happy one, for he was thoroughly trained both in military affairs and in national politics. But the duties of the great office were too much for him; he had reached the limit of his capacity. He was no match in ability for the great war President of the North. The southern writers attribute much of the ill fortune of the South to the want of capacity in President Davis. It is certain that he made many blunders, the most disastrous, perhaps, being his supplanting the Fabian-like Johnston with the impetuous Hood to oppose Sherman before Atlanta.

Jefferson Davis was at heart a sincere man. He was a man of high moral and religious principles. He represented the radical element of the slavocracy, but there is every reason to believe that his motives were honest. When he took leave of the United States Senate in January, 1861, he uttered no word of bravado nor idle boast. He deplored the situation from the

depth of his soul, and his audience was affected to tears by the "plaintive music of his voice, the sincerity of his manner, and the pathos of his words."<sup>1</sup> That night he wrestled with God in prayer for peace.

Had the great rebellion succeeded, the name of Jefferson Davis would stand among the first in history. But the cause in which he labored was not the cause of humanity, and the future will probably suffer his name to perish.

Another conspicuous figure of the South was Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President of the Confederacy. Stephens was the grandson of a captain in the Revolution who had also served in the French and Indian War. His people moved from Pennsylvania to Georgia soon after the Revolution, and here Alexander was born in the first year of our second war with England. As a boy he was sickly, thoughtful, solitary, spending his youth in various schools, in each of which he took the highest rank in his class. As a man he was frail of body, low of stature, and never weighed a hundred pounds. Entering Congress as a Whig in

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, Vol. III. p 272.

1843, he served until 1859, when he resigned, saying that he "saw that there was bound to be a smash-up on the road, and resolved to jump off at the first station."

He was a man of remarkable physical courage. On one occasion when in a fight with a Georgia judge he was pinned to the ground and terribly slashed with a knife. His antagonist then raised the knife, and shouted, "If you don't retract, I'll cut your throat." "Never! cut!" answered Stephens, defiantly, and he grasped the descending blade, cutting his hand to the bone.

Unlike Jefferson Davis, Stephens represented the conservative element of the South. He was a true friend of slavery, but opposed secession with all his strength. When the Georgia convention met for the purpose of passing a secession ordinance, he made a most courageous stand for the Union, but, being overruled, he conscientiously went with his State and cast his lot with the South.

After being chosen Vice-President of the Confederate States, he made a great speech at Savannah, in which he sounded the key-note of the doctrine of the slave power. With great

force he argued that the negro race is by nature inferior to the white race, and its normal condition that of servitude; that the Creator "has, for His own purpose, made one race to differ from another, as He has made one star to differ from another in glory; . . . that the Confederacy is founded upon principles in strict conformity with God's laws; that the stone which was rejected by the first builders is become the chief stone of the corner in the new edifice."

Stephens was faithful to the southern cause during the war, but when he saw that the South was playing a losing game he was one of the first to honestly seek for peace, and after the war was over he again displayed his high moral courage by defending the rights of the black man. He became thoroughly reconciled to the results of the war, and spent several years of his old age as a member of the National Legislature of the reconstructed Union.

One of the ablest and most vehement of the leaders for secession was Robert Toombs of Georgia. Mr. Toombs had been a Whig and a co-worker with Stephens for many years, and the two had dealt a stunning blow to their party

in refusing to support Scott in 1852. Toombs differed from Stephens, however, in being far more extreme and uncompromising than the latter. He was radical, impatient, violent. What William Lloyd Garrison was to the cause of abolition, Robert Toombs was to the cause of secession. He denounced all opposition in unmeasured terms. He pronounced Abraham Lincoln "an enemy of the human race, deserving the execration of all mankind."<sup>1</sup> Toombs it was who pronounced this government a slavery government, as slavery was written on its heart, the Constitution. It was Toombs who prophesied that slavery would overspread the whole land, and that he would live to call the roll of his slaves at the foot of Bunker Hill monument.

As a debater in Congress he was a veritable Boanerges. In this respect he may be compared with John Adams during the Revolutionary period. During the war Toombs served at different times in the Confederate Congress, President Davis's cabinet, and as a commander in the field. The war over, he, like Davis, was

<sup>1</sup> Blaine, Vol. I. p. 247.

one of the few southern leaders who declined to accept a pardon and refused to become a citizen of the reconstructed Union.

Another of the "fire-eaters" of the South was Judah P. Benjamin, United States senator from Louisiana. Born in the West Indies, of Hebrew parents, he came to the United States, was educated at Yale, and made his home in Louisiana, where he became the most learned lawyer in the State. In his farewell address to the Senate he made an ingenious but fallacious argument to show that Louisiana, notwithstanding the fact that the territory had been ceded and retroceded by France and Spain, and finally purchased by the United States, still retained all the essentials of sovereignty and had a right to secede from the Union. Benjamin served the Confederacy with much ability during its brief career, and when it collapsed he made his escape to England, where he afterward resided. In England he became a queen's counsel and rose to be one of the leading lawyers in the kingdom.

One of the most brilliant of the southern chieftains was John C. Breckenridge, Vice-Pres-



ident during the four years preceding the war, and candidate of the ultra slaveholders for the presidency in 1860. Breckenridge was a grandson of a cabinet officer of Thomas Jefferson. He belonged to one of the most cultured families of the South, and became the natural successor in public esteem in Kentucky to the great Henry Clay. When Kentucky refused to secede and practically decided for the Union, Breckenridge sacrificed his great popularity and went with the South, which he served with marked ability on the battle-field and in the cabinet of Jefferson Davis. John C. Breckenridge was a brilliant orator, most attractive in personal appearance and an all-round high-bred gentleman. It was generally believed that he blighted and sacrificed an illustrious career by casting his fortunes with the South.

Other noted statesmen of the South were William L. Yancey of Alabama, who belonged to the radical wing, and who did so much to "fire the southern heart"; Robert B. Rhett, also of the extreme class of secessionists; Isham G. Harris, governor of Tennessee at the outbreak of the war, served the cause of

slavery for four years with his whole heart, but afterward learned to love the old Union and spent twenty years of his later life in the United States Senate; and Henry A. Wise, who had done more to destroy the Know-Nothing party than any other man, and who, as governor of Virginia, conducted the execution of John Brown. These and many other characters must be brought into review by the student who would make himself acquainted with the great rebellion. We turn now to a brief notice of a few of the Northern legislators, beginning with

*Sumner and Fessenden.*

Charles Sumner was on the whole the greatest figure in Congress during the war. Sprung from the sternest New England stock, he displayed the strongest traits of the Puritan character. As a youth Charles Sumner was very studious and ambitious; he seemed to feel that he was predestined to fill some great position and to labor in some great cause. His aim in early life was to become a jurist, and the one great man whom he admired and imitated



above all others was Joseph Story.<sup>1</sup> Sumner's learning was very extensive, rather broad than profound. A three years' sojourn in Europe, where he moved in the highest social circles, rounded out his education and made of him a man of the world. He returned from Europe in 1845, and soon afterward attracted wide attention through a Fourth of July oration. His age was now thirty-four, and from this time his fame extended in ever widening circles until it compassed the civilized world.

In 1847 Sumner openly espoused the cause of the Free Soil party, and by so doing he incurred the displeasure of the élite of Boston. The doors of the fashionable, in whose homes he had been a familiar figure, were now closed in his face. This he felt keenly, for he was a born aristocrat, but on no condition did he permit his principles to be disturbed by public disapproval.

The opening of a great career came to Sumner in 1851, when the Free Soilers and Democrats joined hands and elected him to the United States Senate — without his having

<sup>1</sup> Dawes's "Charles Sumner," p. 13.

served the usual apprenticeship in the Lower House. Within the same year he made an antislavery speech, his maiden speech in the Senate, and a great effort it was. His keynote was "Freedom is national, slavery sectional." The speech marked an epoch in the great battle against slavery, and henceforth Sumner was looked upon as the prophet of freedom. By this speech he won a National fame which never waned to the end of his life. From this day onward he stood shoulder to shoulder with Seward, Chase, Hale, and Wade, and his light was never dimmed by contact with theirs.

Charles Sumner was not a ready debater; he studied his subject with great care, wrote out his speeches in full, and committed or read them. Sumner was never a party leader; he was ill adapted to the tedious work of law-making, and took little part in the routine work of the Senate. He was a student of great questions, an idealist, a theorist, and his theories were not always practical. He was not able to read the popular mind; he stood aloof from the common crowd, and, like Web-

ster, won the admiration rather than the love of the people. The great subject nearest his heart for many years was the freeing of the slaves, and he did more than any other man to make the Republican party an antislavery party.

In debate Sumner was dogmatic and opinionated, severe and caustic with an opponent, and scathing in his denunciations. He was so absorbed in his own views that he could not tolerate an adverse opinion, nor give an opponent credit for honestly differing with him. His greatest defect was his egotism, which was based on his lifelong belief that he was no ordinary person, but was ordained to a great career. It was not infrequent that when some admirer would introduce himself to Sumner, the latter would ask, "What have you ever done to merit notice from me?"

But Charles Sumner was right at heart, and his long championship of the rights of the black man sprung from the sincerest of motives. In 1856, after Sumner had made his great speech on "The Crime against Kansas," in which he bitterly denounced Senator

Butler of South Carolina, he was murderously assaulted in the senate-chamber by Preston Brooks, a nephew of Mr. Butler and member of the Lower House. So great were Mr. Sumner's injuries, that four years passed before he regained his normal health. His later years were embittered in various ways. His twin sister had died in early life, and all his people had been called away, one by one, until he was left without immediate relatives. Soon after his assault by Brooks, one of his favorite brothers, whose house was to Charles a second home, perished, with all his family, by shipwreck. To these misfortunes must be added a very unhappy marriage, contracted long after he passed middle age, and finally his unfortunate quarrel with President Grant during the closing years of his life.

Charles Sumner was a great constitutional lawyer, a profound student of books, but not of men, an orator, and a patriot of the highest motives, but he cannot be placed in the first rank as a statesman.

Another great son of New England whose services in the Senate during the war became

conspicuous was William Pitt Fessenden. During part of his senatorial service he had two brothers in the House,—the only instance in our history in which three brothers served in Congress at the same time.<sup>1</sup> Fessenden was born among the hills of New Hampshire; he received a thorough education, chose the legal profession, settled in Portland, Maine, at the age of twenty-three, and in a few years was the acknowledged leader of the Maine bar. By the time he reached middle age he had no superior as a lawyer in the United States. In 1843, after several years' service in the legislature of his adopted State, he was elected to the Lower House of Congress; ten years later he became a member of the United States Senate, where he at once took his place at the forefront among the leaders of that body. Like Sumner, Fessenden was a man of the purest character and looked with contempt upon the demagogue; he was possessed of unlimited courage and was saturated with anti-slavery doctrine; his attitude toward the public was rather cold and distant, but in spite of this,

<sup>1</sup> Blaine, Vol. I. p. 316.

he had made a most favorable impression upon the country and had won National fame some years before the war.

But, unlike the great Massachusetts senator, Fessenden was always considerate of the rights, and charitable in judging the motives, of an opponent. He was a ready debater. He spoke without apparent effort, and his speeches are models of correct English, clearness, and accurate reasoning. His speech against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill must be classed among the best that were brought out by that famous legislation. In the years following Fessenden drew the attention of the entire country by his speeches on the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, the Dred Scott decision, and the Lecompton Constitution. He was one of the chief founders of the Republican party, and to the end of his life stood among the first in its councils; but he never wanted courage to criticise its acts with the utmost candor when his judgment so dictated.

In 1864, when Secretary Chase resigned from the treasury, Fessenden became his successor, but resigned from the treasury the following



year, and was, for a third time, elected to the United States Senate.

The one act by which Fessenden will be longest remembered in American history is the position he took at the trial of President Johnson. When this closing tragedy of the great drama of the Civil War was attracting the attention of the world; when the House had impeached the President with indecent haste, and the Republican party was clamoring for his conviction by the Senate, it was Fessenden who, amid the execrations of his party and with a moral courage that approaches the sublime, led the little band of Republicans who voted for acquittal. It is now agreed by all parties that the conviction and deposing of President Johnson on the charges brought against him would have been a National calamity, and the one man to whom, above all others, the Nation owes the happy result is William Pitt Fessenden.

### *Other Senatorial Lights*

We must not omit from this list of notables the famous senator from Ohio, the man who would have become President of the United



States had Andrew Johnson been convicted by the Senate in 1868 — Benjamin Franklin Wade. He was born in Massachusetts in 1800, and at the age of twenty-one migrated to the State of Ohio, where he became a true pioneer, clearing away the forest, working as a common laborer, and teaching school. He was late in acquiring his education, which, however, was never very extensive. He entered the Senate the same year with Sumner, 1851, and the two were co-laborers in the same cause in that body for eighteen years. As a radical, uncompromising enemy of slavery, Wade even surpassed Sumner.

For vigorous, dashing energy, and unflinching courage, Benjamin Wade may be compared to General Andrew Jackson. When the battle of Bull Run resulted in the rout of the Union soldiers, Senator Wade, who had driven out to witness an exhibition of American valor, was so exasperated at their retreat that he and a few friends who had accompanied him leaped from their carriage, and with drawn revolvers kept back the rushing tide of fugitives for a quarter of an hour!

Senator Wade vehemently opposed the reconstruction policy of President Lincoln, and, in the summer of 1864, in conjunction with Henry Winter Davis, wrote a scathing denunciation of the President's course in opposing the will of Congress on that important subject. Benjamin Wade, with all his shortcomings, must be classed among the ablest, the bravest, and the purest defenders of the National cause during the dark days of the Civil War.

Other prominent figures in the Senate deserve far more notice than our limited space will admit. There was Jacob Collamer of Vermont, who had been justice of the supreme court of his State and had been postmaster-general in the cabinet of the Soldier-President, Zachary Taylor. His forty years of public life before the war gave him the wisdom that comes with long experience, and no man in the Senate excelled him in wise, conservative judgment, nor was there any whose counsels commanded a profounder respect. Zachariah Chandler was one of the many brilliant men of New England birth who had sought a home in the growing West. He had made Michigan his home, and after a

business career that brought him wealth, he entered the field of politics. As his adopted State changed its political complexion during the turmoil preceding the war, Chandler inherited the mantle worn so many years by that Democratic leader whose name had stood first in Michigan since the War of 1812 — General Lewis Cass. Chandler was ever a friend to the slave, and had been interested in the underground railroad. As a member of the Senate he was intolerant and radical, but always patriotic and incorruptible. Edward Baker was the brilliant senator from Oregon who gave his life to the cause of the Union ere the first year of the war had closed. Born in England, he came to the United States in early life, first made his home in Philadelphia, then in Illinois, where he rose to distinction, became the lifelong friend of Lincoln, served in the Mexican War, and soon after made his home on the Pacific Coast, whence he returned East as a United States senator in 1861. Baker was handsome, winning in manners, irresistibly charming as an orator,<sup>1</sup> and filled with an

<sup>1</sup> Blaine, Vol. I. p. 321.

uncompromising love of his adopted country. His appearance on the floor of the Senate in full uniform when he delivered one of the most eloquent speeches heard by that body during the war period left a glowing picture in the minds of all; but a few days later the country was shocked by his tragic end. While leading his forces with reckless bravery at the fateful Ball's Bluff, a bullet pierced his brain, and the brilliant soldier-senator fell dead upon the field of glory.

Others can only be mentioned: Henry Wilson, the lifelong foe of the slave power, who afterward became Vice-President of the United States; David Wilmot, who had given his name to the famous proviso of the preceding period; Lyman Trumbull, the learned lawyer from Illinois who ranked high among the statesmen that made the Prairie State famous during antebellum days; and John Sherman, lately transferred from the House, still in his youth, and destined yet to spend more than a third of a century in the political arena and to make a great name in the Senate and the cabinet.

*Great Leaders in the House*

The most striking personage in the Lower House of Congress during the war period was "The Great Commoner," Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania. Born in Vermont eight years before the close of the eighteenth century, he had long passed middle life when the Civil War began. After completing his education at Dartmouth, he made his home in the Keystone State, where for nearly half a century he was a most conspicuous figure.

Stevens first attracted National attention as a leader of the Anti-Masons in the early thirties; in 1835 he won a remarkable victory in the Pennsylvania legislature in a great speech defending the common school system of that State; he attracted National attention as an opponent of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850; he held the reins in the Lower House during the war as no other man could; but the most notable work of his great life was the part he took in reconstruction, which will be treated in a later chapter.

As Sumner and Wade represented the radi-

cal antislavery element in the Senate, Stevens represented it in the House. The one great passion of his life was to destroy the slave power and to elevate the black man. In his zeal he even reminds us of the misguided John Brown; he seemed to love the African race better than his own race, and before his death he directed that his body be laid to rest in a private cemetery because the public cemeteries had been limited in their charters to the white race. Stevens was extremely severe in denunciation, radical, and intolerant. He belonged to that class in the North whose attitude toward the South was characterized by bitter personal feeling—who could not forgive a conquered and prostrate foe, but hastened to place the grinding heel upon his neck.

There was no more interesting figure in the House at the time we are treating than the venerable John J. Crittenden of Kentucky. Born in the year of the framing of the Constitution, he had passed the allotted three score years and ten, and indeed was looked upon as a patriarch among his fellows, a rep-



representative of a former generation. Crittenden had served in the War of 1812, and had entered the Senate on the last day of the administration of James Madison. Six times in all he was elected to the Senate, usually, however, serving less than a full term. In the meantime he had graced the cabinets of Harrison and Fillmore; and now in the December of life he was elected to the Lower House of Congress, where, despite his weight of years, he was one of the most active members.

Crittenden had watched with painful interest the long years of increasing strife between the North and the South, and now, when the open rupture threatened the life of the Republic that he had loved and served so long, he could not hesitate, though from a slave State, to throw the powerful weight of his influence in the balance of the North. It was John J. Crittenden, above all men, that prevented the secession of Kentucky in 1861. The most conspicuous work of his congressional career was, like that of David Wilmot, the bringing forward of a measure that did



not become law—the Crittenden Compromise. The aged Kentuckian was greatly devoted to the restoration of the Union, but his eyes were permitted only to behold afar the land of promise when he was called, in 1863, to join the silent majority.

Justin S. Morrill, who died in 1898 after the longest continuous service in the Senate in American history, was a member of the House during the war, and was the author of the famous Morrill Tariff, which became a law in the closing days of Buchanan's administration.

During the whole or part of the war period we find in the House many men who were then, or afterward became, famous in our National Legislature. From Illinois we have Elihu B. Washburn, the unswerving friend of General Grant, the "Watchdog of the Treasury," afterward minister to France during the siege of 1870; John A. McClernard and John A. Logan, afterward noted generals in the army, and Owen Lovejoy, brother of the famous editor who had been killed by a proslavery mob in 1837. From Indiana came

William S. Holman, for many years known as the "Great Objector" to extravagant use of public money; Schuyler Colfax, afterward Vice-President; George W. Julian, Free Soil candidate for Vice-President in 1852, and later one of the founders of the Republican party, and Daniel W. Voorhees whose after senatorial career won him National fame. In the New York delegation we find the brilliant and dashing Roscoe Conkling; William A. Wheeler, afterward Vice-President of the United States, and E. G. Spaulding, the author of our system of National banks. From Massachusetts came George S. Boutwell, the able manager of President Johnson's impeachment, United States senator and secretary of the treasury under Grant, and the notorious Oakes Ames of Credit Mobilier fame. From Maine, the State that has furnished so many great men in the last quarter century, came the only man in our later history who can be classed as a party leader with Jefferson, Jackson, and Clay — James G. Blaine. Many other States sent able men to Congress during the war, the most noted being Ohio. From this State we

find George H. Pendleton ; James M. Ashley, the mover of the thirteenth amendment to the Constitution ; Samuel S. Cox, who as a wit had no equal in Congress since the days of John Randolph ; Clement L. Vallandigham, whose somewhat erratic career brought him at least the credit of unlimited courage ; and Robert C. Schenck, whose powers of leadership in the House threatened for a time the prestige of the "Great Commoner" from Pennsylvania.

It was at this time that Ohio began that remarkable career in National politics which no other State can parallel in our history, except Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is a notable fact that the three most famous generals of the Civil War were natives of Ohio — Grant, Sherman, Sheridan. Of the seven Presidents since the war, three, Hayes, Garfield, and McKinley, were born in and elected from Ohio, while two others, Grant and Harrison, were natives of Ohio. Vice-President Hendricks was born in Ohio ; Cleveland's running mate in 1888, Allen G. Thurman, was an Ohioan ; Harrison's running mate in 1892, Whitelaw Reid, is a native of the same State. The record is a very remarkable one and may not be duplicated by any State for centuries to come. It may be added that the two ablest Indian warriors ever known to the white race were both born on Ohio soil — Pontiac and Tecumseh.

## CHAPTER IV

### EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE CIVIL WAR

#### *Cause of the War*

THE cause of the great Civil War in America was slavery. Some writers have endeavored to show that there were various causes that brought about that great conflict; but they may all be condensed into one great, sweeping cause of causes—slavery. The immediate occasion of the opening of hostilities was, as every one knows, secession; the war was essentially a war for the Union in its early stages, a war against secession; but secession was the outgrowth of the long strife engendered by slavery. The election of Lincoln precipitated secession, it is true; but why was Lincoln objectionable to the South? Because of his views and the views of his party on the extension of slavery. The fierce struggle for Kansas hastened the great con-

flict; but that was a struggle for and against slavery; it was a child of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was a slavery measure. The Dred Scott decision did much to widen the breach between the North and the South, but there would have been no Dred Scott decision without slavery.

It is true that the civilization of the South was quite unlike that of the North, that there was much prejudice on each side, and that the two sections had grown apart for many years; but the underlying cause of this difference was that slavery existed in the one section and not in the other. It is a fact that the people of the South loved their respective States better than they loved the Union; they honestly believed in State Sovereignty, mis-called States' Rights, and the conviction that they were defending their sovereign States from invasion did much to animate the common soldier in battle. But those who looked beneath the surface could not fail to see that the doctrine of State Sovereignty was not more accepted at the South than at the North

during the first decades of the government's existence, that it had been developed and nurtured by the South only as an effective weapon with which to fight the battles of slavery. The climate and soil of the South conduce to establish a different form of industry from that of the North, and in some degree they affect the general status and civilization of the people; but this slight difference could in no way engender a mortal strife between the two sections. Why should the Southern planter be less loyal to the Union which his fathers had aided in establishing than the Massachusetts manufacturer or the Ohio farmer? It was not so at the beginning of the century; it is not so to-day, since the apple of discord has been removed. In point of fact, there was but one basal cause of the long years of strife between the great sections of our country, resulting in the Civil War, and that was slavery.

Slavery was a political question and it was a moral question. The slaveholders sought to extend their peculiar institution so as to maintain their political power and thus pre-



vent unfriendly legislation in Congress. But as free labor and slave labor could not flourish in the same locality, the free States sought to restrict slavery, or at least to prevent its extension. Hence arose a strife in the National Legislature in the first quarter of the century, and it increased in violence for many years.

The question was also a moral one. There was a large and increasing number of people in the North who believed slavery to be morally wrong. Hence arose the Abolitionists, the Lundys, the Lovejoys, the Garrisons, the John Browns. It is difficult to say which of these two forces was the stronger, the moral or the political. Certain it is that the two working together brought about the estrangement of the two great sections of the country, resulting finally in the great Civil War.

### *Beginning of the Long Strife*

The friction between the North and the South on account of slavery was almost constant for forty years before the war. At times the agitation subsided, and the subject seemed to slumber for several years, when it



would burst forth again with increased violence. Each of these jostlings of the two great forces left its mark, each made the wound a little deeper, each played its part in bringing on the final crisis.

The most serious of these early conflicts was that of 1820, resulting in the Missouri Compromise. After a severe struggle in Congress, covering nearly two years and extending to every part of the country, the question was settled. The compromise line was conceded by the South to appease the North and to win northern votes; but the real victory rested with the South in that Missouri was admitted to the Union as a slave State.

Next came the Indian wars in the South during the thirties. The proximity of the red man was a constant menace to the peaceful possession of the black-man by the slaveholder. The latter, therefore, demanded of the General Government that he be protected in the quiet possession of his human property, whatever the cost might be. The Government, heedful of its master's voice, waged war on the Indian, exterminating some tribes, moving

others bodily and without provocation to the untrodden wilderness beyond the Mississippi, keeping up the wars for seven or eight years, and spending \$30,000,000—all for the slaveholder. Behold another victory for the South!

Then came the Texas question. The South was hungry for Texas. What a fine extension of slave territory it would make! The slaveholder thereupon demanded that Texas be admitted into the Union. The North objected, at first feebly, then more vigorously, but still too feebly, to withstand the impetuous South, and Texas was admitted as a slave State.

### *The Mexican War and the Omnibus Bill*

Hard upon this follows the Mexican War, waged, not because of a boundry dispute, as the world was made to believe, but because Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard—because the slaveholder cast his eyes upon the vast, fertile Southwest, and desired it for his own. The Government again heeded his call to arms, and Mexico was dismembered, and the California country came into the possession of the United States.

Another victory for the South? Apparently, but not quite. It happened that California was settled by the people and not by the politicians, and consequently it became a free, and not a slave, State. Had the matter been decided at Washington, it would have been otherwise, as foreshadowed by the fate of the Wilmot Proviso.

The Omnibus Bill, or Compromise Measures of 1850, next claimed the country's attention. This did not precipitate a contest between the sections, but it involved the question in dispute, and one of its provisions became one of the most irritating that disturbed a long-suffering public during those troublous times. The Omnibus Bill was, on the whole, favorable to the South. It is true California was received as a free State; but in receiving it Congress only ratified what the people had already done. The prohibition of the slave-trade in the District of Columbia is also regarded as a northern victory; but it was little more than a sop thrown by the slave power to the clamorous Abolitionists. Of the three remaining items, one, the erection of Utah and New Mexico into Territories without mention of slavery, may be considered neutral,

while the other two, the payment by the Government of \$10,000,000 to Texas for her claims on New Mexico, and the Fugitive Slave Law, are distinctively southern measures. The latter, indeed, became the most prominent feature of this famous mid-century legislation and practically gave it its character.<sup>1</sup> As a whole, therefore, the Omnibus Bill was favorable to the South.

Far more one-sided, however, was the great measure that followed a few years later—the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Despite the fact that it was born in the brain of a northern senator, it was a slave measure pure and simple, and was but the normal product of a soil that had long been under the tillage of the slavocracy.

A little later the Dred Scott decision gave the northern people another shock, and led them to believe that the judiciary was under the same mesmeric influence as the other two branches of the Government.

One more of these antebellum skirmishes and our list is completed—the fight for the possession of Kansas. The administration did all in

<sup>1</sup> See chapter on "The Underground Railroad," "Side Lights," Vol. I.

its power to make Kansas a slave State, but there were forces at work in Kansas which the administration could not control, and the ultimate outcome was a defeat of the slave power.

It will be noticed by the foregoing that in every encounter except two between the forces of freedom and of slavery the latter bore away the victor's palm. And it is a remarkable fact that in deciding these two, the admission of California and the struggle for Kansas, and in these only, the *people* had an opportunity to render the ultimate verdict. In view of these facts two conclusions are forced upon any one who looks the facts squarely in the face: first, that for a generation before the war the most potent voice in the Government as such was the voice of the slaveholder; second, that the slaveholder, with all his power over the politicians, with all the prestige of party machinery, never succeeded in winning and controlling the great body of the people. Thus we have the anomalous condition of a government being for many years out of harmony with the people by whose authority it existed, on the greatest public question of the time.



It might be asked, Why did the people, if they opposed the domination of the slaveholder, wait so many years before rebuking him at the polls? Be it remembered that the specific causes of these encounters were sectional and not partisan questions; and in no way could the people rebuke the Government through the elections except by reorganizing parties on sectional lines, and that is what they actually did in the organizing of the Republican party. But even before this party was born, the people rebuked the Government for truckling to the slave power when opportunity offered. Let us examine.

In 1820 there was no way in which the voters could express their disapproval of the decision of Congress (as both contestants belonged to the same party), except to form a new party, and even this could not have reversed the decision, for Missouri had already been admitted as a slave State.

Again, when the Texas question came up for decision, the voter who had strong convictions against annexation scarcely knew what to do, for both political parties stood on similar ground. The Democratic platform pronounced in favor



of admitting Texas in 1844, while the Whig party, some months later, actually brought about annexation. It is true that the Tyler administration, which admitted Texas, was not strictly a Whig administration, though Tyler had been elected by that party, nor is it fair to the party to regard annexation as a purely Whig measure. Yet it is true that many of the Whigs favored annexation, and even Clay in his famous Alabama letter expressed his willingness to see Texas admitted. Neither party, therefore, as a party, was positively opposed to extending slave territory by adding this new slave State. The voter who did oppose such extension found himself out of harmony with both the great political parties.

But note what follows. The Government, through the Democratic party, waged the Mexican War, the real object of which was to extend slave territory ; but the *people* reversed the decision and made California a free State ; and more, they defeated that party in the ensuing presidential election. Again, the Whig party fathered the Omnibus Bill ; and the *people*, at the next National election, gave

the party such a blow that it fell to rise no more. Still again, the Government, through the Democratic party, enacted the Kansas-Nebraska Law. The people were offended, and there being no rival party through which they could chasten the offending one, they formed a new party, and the political revolution of 1860 was the result.

The people had therefore registered their disapproval of the slaveholder's rule on various occasions ; they had defeated each political party in turn for yielding to this southern master ; and finally, unable to control either party, they organized a new one whose very corner-stone was non-extension of slave territory. This reorganization of party lines had its root, not in high political circles, but in the conscience of the Nation. Calhoun was right when he claimed that, if the moral consciousness of a majority of the people opposed slavery, slavery must fall. And this was beyond a doubt the condition of the country during the years just preceding the war.

It must be noticed, however, that the newly formed party did not, during the first years

of its existence, command a majority of the electors, and even in 1860 the election of Lincoln would have been doubtful but for the fatal split in the Democratic party. This fact seems to indicate that, after all, the majority of the people were not with the new movement. But this is not difficult to explain: first, there were thousands of voters who were in sympathy with the non-extension sentiment, but their party allegiance was so deep-seated, their interest in the history and achievements of their party was so great, that it was not an easy matter to break away from it; second, there were other thousands who were willing to rebuke the slaveholder by an adverse vote now and then; but they were too timid to openly provoke him to renewed violence and threats of destroying the Union.

It may often be a subject of wonder that the slaveholder held such sway in National politics for so long a time. Why were there so many "Northern men with Southern principles"? Because the statesmen of the South were not only better schooled in politics than their brothers from the North, but because

they were united on the one great subject nearest their heart, and they were exacting and unyielding in the demands upon those who sought their support for high position. For many years before the war no man could hope to be elected President who had shown an unfriendly spirit at any time in his career toward the interests of slavery. Such a one would find himself opposed by a united South, and the North was not sufficiently united to successfully compete with it. The result was that northern politicians were not only careful not to oppose the slave owner, but were ready to lend him a helping hand when called upon to do so. When, therefore, the slaveholder desired to enact some special law for his own benefit, he found little difficulty in securing northern support.

### *The Slaveholder's Blunder*

But the southerner made some serious blunders, not the least of which was his continuous thrusting of the despised subject on the northern conscience. The people of the North, with the exception of the few Abolitionists,

might have allowed the matter to rest *in statu quo* for indefinite years ; but the southerner refused to let it alone. Not content with adding Missouri and Arkansas and Florida and Texas to his domain, he forced on the country the Fugitive Slave Law, which did more to arouse the moral sentiment of the North than the arguments of the Abolitionists had done in many years.<sup>1</sup> The people of the free States were thus led, or rather forced, to look more deeply into the subject, and it was only the repulsive features of slavery that they saw.

The relation between the master and slave was, in the great majority of cases, a pleasant and happy relation ; but this feature the northerner did not see ; he saw only the fugitive and heard his tale of woe ; again, he saw the fleeing black man captured and hustled back under the lash to the land of bondage. The Fugitive Slave Law forced him to see these things, and it quickened his conscience against the institution of slavery itself as nothing else could have done. The slaveholder blamed the North for agitating the subject ;

<sup>1</sup> Channing's "Student's History," p. 462.

but it is certainly true that he caused much of the agitation by forcing upon it such enactments as this odious law.

The slaveholder knew that modern civilization had condemned slavery. Why, then, did he not remain as quiet and unobserved as possible? His aim seemed to be to force the North to acknowledge that slavery is right, but his efforts had the opposite effect. He seemed as one who advocates a cause in which he but half believes — he argues the louder and the harder that he may convince himself as well as his opponent.

The most serious blunder of the slaveholder was his forcing the war by an attempt to break up the Union. He had been protected by the Constitution and by his influence over the northern politician; but in seceding from the Union he shattered the Constitution and alienated his northern friends who still loved the Union. How could he hope to win in a final appeal to arms? He knew that the North was far stronger than the South. Perhaps he underestimated the love for the old flag in the free States; perhaps he believed that the North could not be united



against the South ; perhaps he relied on foreign recognition and aid. He must have foreseen that, in an exhaustive war, a fight to the finish, between the Union and the Slave Power, both could not survive—the Union or slavery must perish. The slaveholder therefore took a grave risk when he defied the Union without having measured its strength. It was a leap in the dark, and it proved to be a fatal blunder.

His action was practically taking his case from the lower court, the Constitution and the National Legislature, to the higher tribunal—the People. Strange that he had not learned by the fate of California and of Kansas, of the Whig party and the Kansas-Nebraska Democrats, that the people were not with him. By his action he invoked against himself the war power of the President ; and that included, not only the armies and navies of the United States, but also the entire resources of the loyal people. The slaveholder was admirably brave and daring, but he was rash and hasty—almost foolhardy ; he staked his all and lost all.

Finally, it cannot be denied by any fair-minded observer that the people of the South

were generally sincere in battling against the Union. No people could fight with such valor, such devotion to a cause, such marvellous self-denial, as did the people of the South unless they believed their cause to be right. The southern people had not learned to love the Union as had the people of the North; they believed the State had an inherent right to secede. They had been taught from childhood to love the State above the Nation, and the North they regarded almost as a foreign people. Nor did they regard themselves as rebels against their government, but rather as an independent people (after secession had been accomplished), repelling invasion and conquest of their own soil.

The people of the North were equally sincere. They denied the right of secession; they denied the right of the State to seize United States forts and arsenals. And, above all, they felt that they were fighting the battles of humanity in preserving the principle of self-government. Had the South succeeded, the future would doubtless have witnessed further secessions and subdivisions until North America would be divided, like South America, into petty

warring states. Republican government would have been put back for centuries and the march of modern civilization greatly impeded. This, then, was the great underlying principle which led the Government to preserve its integrity by force of arms. And who among the friends of self-government, the lovers of liberty in the North or in the South, or from any part of the earth, does not rejoice that we were able to prove to the world that a great people are capable of self-government and able to maintain their national integrity?

## CHAPTER V

### THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG

A DETAILED knowledge of the movements of armies and their operations in battle is not of primary importance to the ordinary student of history. This belongs to the province of the military student. We have chosen, however, to devote this chapter to a notice of the greatest battle in the greatest of civil wars — the Battle of Gettysburg. The military operations of the Civil War were carried on, for the most part, south of Mason and Dixon's line; but this most famous of the battles was fought on northern soil, on the soil of the old Keystone State, which had given birth to the Declaration of Independence and to the Constitution of the United States.

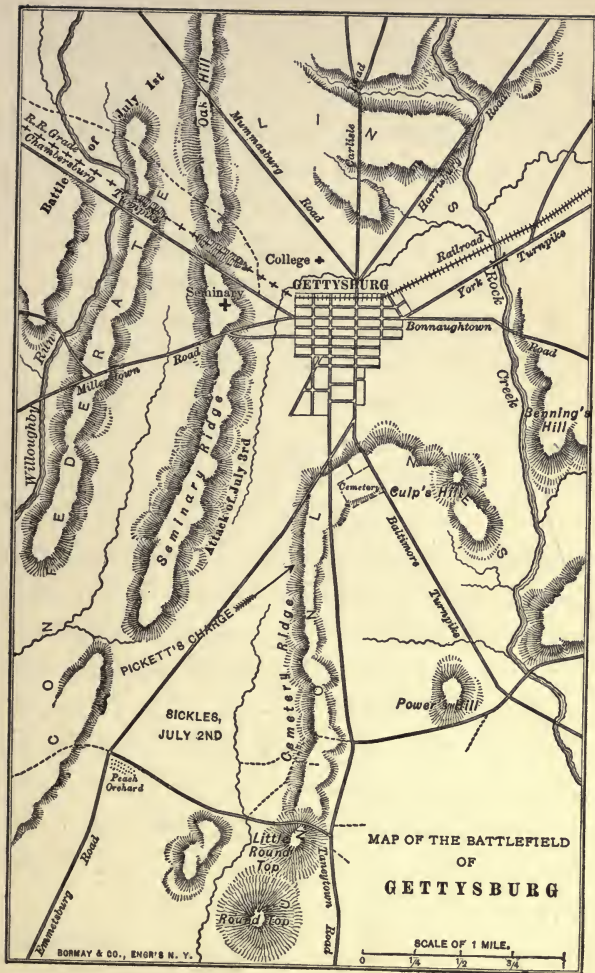
Gettysburg is a quiet hamlet nestled among the hills in Adams county, Pennsylvania, and in 1863 contained about fifteen hundred inhabitants. It had been founded in 1780 by James

Gettys, who perhaps never dreamed that his name, thus given to the village, would, through apparently accidental circumstances, become famous in history for all time.

The hills surrounding Gettysburg are not rugged nor precipitous; they are little more than gentle swells of ground, and most of them were covered with timber at the time of the famous battle.

The village is the radiating point of several important roads, known by the names of the respective towns to which they lead.<sup>1</sup> The one leading directly northward from the town is known as the Carlisle road, which, passing through the village and deflecting to the southeast, becomes the Baltimore turnpike. East of the Carlisle road is the Harrisburg road and west of it the Mummasburg road. This latter crosses a wooded ridge known as Oak Hill, a mile or more northwest of the town, and this hill became the centre of operations on the first day of the battle. West of the village about half a

<sup>1</sup> A brief notice of the topography of the battle-ground is here necessary. The points mentioned should be carefully noted by the reader and reference made to the accompanying map.







mile is situated on a ridge a Lutheran Theological Seminary, and this ridge, extending north and south, is called Seminary Ridge. Directly south of Gettysburg, almost parallel with Seminary Ridge and about a mile from it, lies Cemetery Ridge. Three miles from the town Cemetery Ridge culminates in a bold, rocky peak, with steep, rugged slopes several hundred feet in height, called Round Top. North of Round Top and quite near it there is a similar peak about half as high called Little Round Top. A mile and a half west of the village flows Willoughby Run, while at about the same distance on the east and nearly parallel to it flows a somewhat larger stream called Rock Creek. Between Rock Creek and the northern extremity of Cemetery Ridge is situated Culp's Hill, one of the most strategic points of the three days' fight. The area of the entire battle-ground is something over twenty-five square miles, all of which may be seen at a glance from any one of the five observatories recently erected on the ground by the Government.

*Advance Movements*

The Army of Northern Virginia, led by the matchless commander, Robert E. Lee, was flushed with victory during the spring and early summer of 1863. With the exception of the drawn battle of Antietam and a few others of lesser note, this army had been generally successful, their most noted victories being the first and last of the two years' warfare — Bull Run and Chancellorsville. On the other hand, the Army of the Potomac, led successively by McDowell, McClellan, Pope, Burnside, and Hooker, had, under its many masters, met with one discouragement after another; and while no one could doubt its patriotism and its valor, the history of its two years' experience showed but few bright pages to cheer the heart of the war-broken soldier and to inspire the hopes of an anxious public. The more disheartening was this when contrasted with the almost unbroken success of the Union arms in the Mississippi Valley.

The most disastrous defeat they had suffered since Bull Run was at Chancellorsville in May

of this year. Yet the Confederate victory at Chancellorsville was a loss rather than a gain, owing to the death of the brilliant, meteoric, Napoleonic Stonewall Jackson. Better could the South have spared the victory and thousands of common soldiers than this dashing, successful leader. Nevertheless, southern hopes were high after Chancellorsville, and public opinion was unanimous in demanding an invasion of the North. Lee decided, therefore, to move northward, cross Mason and Dixon's line, and to make Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, the objective point. It was hoped that Philadelphia would also fall into the hands of the Confederate army. Leaving General Stewart with ten thousand cavalry to watch Hooker and prevent his following in pursuit, Lee crossed the Potomac early in June, and concentrated his army at Hagerstown, Maryland. Everything now seemed to promise a successful invasion of the Keystone State. Lee's army was divided into three corps, commanded respectively by Generals Longstreet, Ewell, and A. P. Hill. As they came near Chambersburg, Lee decided to ap-

proach Harrisburg with the main portion of the army by way of the Cumberland Valley through Chambersburg, Carlisle, and Bridgeport, while he sent General Early with a division of Ewell's corps across the South Mountain and ordered him to move upon Harrisburg by way of the Susquehanna Valley, passing through Gettysburg and York, and crossing the Susquehanna River at Columbia. The towns along both routes were to be assessed for large sums of money, and payment enforced by threats to burn the towns, if they refused.

As the close of June approached, and the Confederate army was scattered over the Cumberland Valley with Early's division thirty miles east of Gettysburg, a scout brought General Lee the startling news that Stewart had failed to detain Hooker south of the Potomac River, that the Army of the Potomac was now in Maryland and in hot pursuit of the southern invaders of northern soil. Lee was quick to perceive the necessity of abandoning, at least for the time, his proposed invasion of the North, and of turning back to encounter his deadly foe on the field of battle.

General Hooker was no longer commander of the Army of the Potomac. He had requested of General Halleck, the commander-in-chief with headquarters at Washington, the use of ten thousand men stationed on Maryland Heights above Harper's Ferry under General French. Halleck, who lacked the military wisdom to grasp the situation, and whose dislike for Hooker was an open secret, refused the request. Hooker instantly resigned the command, and General George G. Meade, one of the ablest of the corps commanders, was appointed in his stead.

The two great armies were now scattered through Maryland and southern Pennsylvania. They were moving each toward the other, and every one saw that there was soon to be a clash of arms more terrific, no doubt, than they had yet experienced in their two years' strife; but at what point the shock of battle would occur no one could tell. Lee had ordered Longstreet and Hill to cross the South Mountain eastward from Chambersburg, and Ewell to return southwestward from York. Their natural meeting-place would be the



vicinity of Gettysburg. Meantime Meade, whose headquarters were at Taneytown, Maryland, had ordered a general movement of the Union army toward Harrisburg, the object being to encounter Lee as soon as it was possible to meet him. He had sent General Buford with four thousand cavalry to meet and hold in check the advance guard of the Confederate columns, and Buford, on the evening of June 30, passed through the little city of Gettysburg and spent the night a mile west of it between Oak Hill and Seminary Ridge. This was the only portion of the two armies that occupied the coming battle-ground at dawn of the first morning of that fatal July, and Buford is credited with having first chosen this site as a suitable battle-ground.<sup>1</sup>

### *The First Day's Battle*

On Wednesday morning, the 1st of July, the forces of the two commanders were still scattered, the extremes being more than forty miles apart. General Sickles with the sixth corps of

<sup>1</sup> Count of Paris, "History of the Civil War," Vol. III. p. 545.

the Army of the Potomac,<sup>1</sup> was at Manchester, over thirty miles away, while Sykes with the fifth corps was at Union Mills, twenty-three miles from Gettysburg; Hancock with the second corps was at Taneytown; but General Reynolds with the first, third, and eleventh corps, was at Marsh Creek, but few miles away and hastening to the scene of the battle. Longstreet, about the same distance away, was approaching by way of the Chambersburg pike, while Hill was in advance of him and near enough to open the battle with Buford in the early forenoon.

The firing began about nine o'clock. Buford had ordered his men to dismount, and he so placed them as to give the enemy the impression that his force was much greater than it really was; at the same time he sent word to Reynolds, urging him to bring up the infantry with the utmost speed, as the enemy was before him in great force. Reynolds soon joined Bu-

<sup>1</sup>The Army of the Potomac was divided into seven corps, known as the First, Second, Third, Fifth, Sixth, Eleventh, and Twelfth, commanded respectively by Generals Reynolds, Hancock, Sickles, Sykes, Sedgwick, Howard, and Slocum.

ford in the cupola of the Lutheran Seminary, which offered an excellent view of the whole ground of operation, and his keen eye taking in at a glance the importance of the situation, he immediately sent word to Meade that in his opinion a decisive battle should be fought at Gettysburg.

He then rode back to the advance division of his command under General Wadsworth, and sent it with double-quick time to join Buford's cavalry. About ten o'clock Reynolds rode out to an elevation between Seminary Ridge and Willoughby Run, where the battle was raging with great vigor. As he sat on his horse in a clump of trees about two hundred yards south of the Chambersburg pike, a sharpshooter's bullet pierced his brain and he fell from his horse. He was borne to the rear by tender hands, but nothing could restore him to consciousness, and in a few minutes he was dead.

John F. Reynolds was born in 1820. He served through the Mexican War and was promoted for gallantry at Monterey and Buena Vista. He was one of the bravest, ablest, and most promising young officers in the army. He

was mourned more generally by the North than was any other man who fell during the war, with the possible exception of General McPherson, who was killed in a similar manner about a year later before Atlanta.

But even so great a loss could not check the fury of the battle. General Abner Doubleday succeeded him as corps commander, but some time later, General O. O. Howard, arriving on the field and ranking Doubleday, succeeded him. The fighting became very severe around the spot where Reynolds fell. As a brigade under Wadsworth, known as the "Iron Brigade," were hotly engaged in the edge of a grove, they saw a brigade led by General Archer,<sup>1</sup> a portion of Heth's division, Hill's corps, running to the same grove. The Iron Brigade pressed boldly forward, made a desperate dash, and captured Archer with two-thirds of his men, the remainder having fled. Not far from the same point

<sup>1</sup> In so brief a description of this battle it will be impossible to give separate notice to the minor organizations of the armies — divisions, brigades, battalions, companies, and their commanders. Only those specially distinguished will be mentioned. The aim has been to give that which will interest, not the military student, but the general reader.

a whole New York regiment was captured, but were afterward rescued by a gallant and impetuous charge of two other New York regiments and one from Wisconsin.

By one o'clock in the afternoon the arrival of large portions of the second and eleventh corps swelled the Federal forces to a formidable army, but still greater were the reënforcements of the Confederates by the arrival of Ewell from Heidlersburg. The battle now became general and extended from the Chambersburg pike across the Mummasburg road south of Oak Hill and eastward almost to Rock Creek. The eastern portion of the Union lines was held by Generals Carl Schurz and Barlow, who were opposed by Early's division of Ewell's corps; that facing Oak Hill was commanded by Robinson with two brigades under Paul and Baxter, Wadsworth being just west of them, and these were opposed by Rhodes's division of Ewell's corps and a large portion of Hill's corps. The fighting line was about a mile north and north-west from the town of Gettysburg.

The battle continued for several hours with unabated fury. The Confederates far outnumbered



bered their antagonists, and, having seized Oak Hill, they had the greater advantage; but until the middle of the afternoon it was impossible to say which would win the day. The roar of artillery and the unceasing rattle of musketry told the story of sacrifice and slaughter as no pen can tell it. At length, as a gentle wind lifted the smoke that enveloped the scene, the Union lines were seen to waver. Schurz, who commanded the eleventh corps, soon fell back to the town, leaving nearly half his soldiers dead or disabled on the field. Ewell ordered a pursuit, and as the remains of the eleventh corps were scattered in disorder through the streets of the village, the Confederates overtook them and made five thousand of them prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

Doubleday fell back in much better order and made a brief stand on Seminary Ridge, where he had thrown up an embankment in the morning for just such an emergency. But he was

<sup>1</sup>The writer visiting the battle-field on the thirty-sixth anniversary of the battle, counted, on the western side of the old toll house on the Chambersburg pike, forty-two bullet-holes within a space eight feet square, fourteen of which were in the shutters of a small window. In the same space were three large holes torn by shell.



soon forced to abandon this position, and fell back to Cemetery Hill just south of the town, which Howard had selected as a general centre for the army and as the most suitable ground from which to make a final stand against the enemy. Howard afterward received the thanks of Congress for making this selection.

It sometimes happens that the sudden arrival of some commanding personage on a battle-field during an engagement has a magic effect on a half-defeated army. Such was the case when Sheridan arrived on the field of Cedar Creek from Winchester, and such was the effect of Hancock's arrival on the battle-field of Gettysburg in the afternoon of the first day's fight. Meade was still at Taneytown, nine miles away. On hearing early in the afternoon of the death of Reynolds, he immediately despatched Hancock to take general charge of the battle. Hancock rode at full speed to the scene and arrived about four o'clock. His presence soon brought order out of chaos. His superb bearing, his air of confidence, his promise of heavy reinforcements during the night, all tended to inspire the retreating army with hope. Hancock

placed Wadsworth with the remains of his division on Culp's Hill; Geary, with the advance of Slocum's corps, just coming up by the way of the Emmitsburg road, he stationed near Round Top. Thus, with the main part of the army on Cemetery Ridge between these two extremes, a curved line was formed with the convex side facing the enemy.

There was no more fighting that day. Only the advanced portion of both armies had been engaged thus far; yet this first day's fight was a formidable battle in itself, and had this been the end of it, the usual story of the defeat of the Army of the Potomac would have gone forth to the world. But no one could be blamed; the Union troops had fought nobly, valiantly, and had retreated before a stronger force only when there was nothing left for them except retreat or utter rout. The loss to the northern army was exceedingly severe on July the 1st. A great commander had fallen in the midst of the strife, General Paul had been shot through both eyes, General Barlow was wounded and left for dead on the field, while the rank and file had suffered the enormous loss of ten thousand men.

The battle of Gettysburg was only begun. Meade had now chosen to make this field, on which the advance corps of the two armies had accidentally met, the ground for a general engagement with the invaders of northern soil. He ordered all the outlying legions of his army to hasten with all speed to the field at Gettysburg. Slocum and Sickles had reached the field early in the evening of the first, but Sedgwick with sixteen thousand men was still at Manchester, thirty miles away; Hancock's corps was hurrying forward from Taneytown; Sykes's corps reached the ground at midnight after a forced march of twenty-three miles from Union Mills.

Lee had also decided on a decisive battle at Gettysburg, and his army, on the night of the first, was all on the ground except his cavalry and Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps. Had the Confederate chieftain known of the condition of his antagonist on the evening of the first day, he would doubtless have followed up his victory; and, had he done so, the battle of Gettysburg would have been another Bull Run. But he allowed the three or four remaining hours of daylight to slip away without

improving them, and thus he gave Meade the entire night in which to arrange his army for a defensive battle. From this serious mistake Lee and his army never recovered to the end of the war. Nevertheless, Lee determined to fight it out at Gettysburg. Indeed, he could not do otherwise than give battle. He had begun an invasion of the North, but this invasion could not possibly have been continued in a hostile country with a great army at his heels, and between him and his supplies—an army equal in valor and in strength to his own. Had Lee continued his march through Pennsylvania with the Army of the Potomac following, he must needs keep his forces together to watch his antagonist, and that would have meant starvation, while Meade's army would have been fed by the willing hands of the surrounding populace. Again, had Lee scattered his forces that they might secure the necessities of life, the various parts would have been attacked singly and annihilated.

Before Lee could continue his invasion, therefore, he must turn and smite the pursuing foe and disable him. But that foe was a giant

of unlimited strength and courage; and the coming together of two such forces for a final, decisive death-struggle, meant that a great battle had to be fought — a greater battle than this Western World had hitherto known!

One other alternative remained to Lee, and that was to return to Virginia without striking a decisive blow. But public opinion at the South and in the army would not have permitted this. Public opinion in America is the ultimate arbiter of great questions. No statesman or warrior can afford to trample on or disregard it; all must bow to this great, final, National tribunal — Public Opinion. It was this universal master that had sent the Confederate leader northward on his mission of destruction; and, had he abandoned the project without a determined effort, even the magic name of Robert E. Lee would have lost its magic at the South. A battle was necessary to the southern commander; and why not at Gettysburg, where the army was now collected and was flushed with the victory of the preliminary struggle of the first day? But Lee's disadvantages were great. He had lost his ablest corps commander,



Jackson; he was without Stewart and his ten thousand cavalry, who had not yet joined the main army; he was on foreign soil with which he was not familiar as with the soil of his own Virginia.

And, further, Meade had the advantage of position. The Union army, with its centre on Cemetery Hill, its right swung around to Culp's Hill and its left to the base of Round Top, with the valley of Rock Creek in the rear, where all manœuvres of the army were unseen by the foe, was in an excellent position to fight a defensive battle. Lee's army rested its centre on Seminary Ridge, its left on the banks of Rock Creek north of Gettysburg, while its right occupied the ridge back of the Emmittsburg road opposite Round Top. It thus formed a grand semicircle five or six miles in length, half surrounding the Army of the Potomac. The disadvantage of Lee's position was twofold: first, there was no unseen valley in the rear, and all the general movements had to be made in view of the enemy; second, his battle-line, forming the outer circle, was much longer than that of Meade, and communications from one



part of the army to another were made with greater difficulty.

Thus during the night of July the 1st, 1863, lay the two vast armies awaiting the coming dawn, as a wild beast crouches to spring upon his prey. It seemed that at last the forces of freedom and of slavery were ready to grapple in a final, deadly struggle for supremacy — that the fate of the great Republic hung in the balance — and the people of the North and of the South awaited with breathless eagerness the decision now about to be made at Gettysburg.

### *The Second Day's Battle*

The dawn on July the 2d betokened a beautiful summer day in southern Pennsylvania. The hours of the night had been used by the two armies in marshalling of battalions and manœuvring of corps and divisions — in preparation for the terrible business of the coming day. But, when morning dawned, both armies hesitated as if unwilling to begin the dreadful task of slaughter and bloodshed. They remained inactive, except for a stray shot here and there, until near four o'clock in the after-

noon. The two commanders-in-chief had been absent at the opening of the battle, but were now on the ground, Lee arriving late in the afternoon of the 1st, and Meade about one o'clock the next morning.

The fighting on this day was confined to the left and right wings, the centres of the two armies remaining comparatively inactive. Lee had ordered Longstreet, who commanded his right wing, to make a general assault on the Union left under Sickles, and Ewell with the left wing to attack the Union right at Culp's Hill, while Hill was to hold the centre in a menacing attitude and thus prevent Meade's centre from aiding the engaged portions.<sup>1</sup>

General Sickles had been stationed by order of General Meade just west of the Round Tops, with his right extending northward to join Hancock's left on Cemetery Ridge, thus forming an unbroken line. But Sickles advanced without

<sup>1</sup> The exact strength of the two armies is not known. Judging from the best sources of information, we would place the Union army at a little over one hundred thousand men, including ten thousand cavalry and seven thousand artillery. The Confederate army probably numbered about ten thousand less than its antagonist.

orders about half a mile to and beyond the Emmittsburg road, breaking his connection with Hancock's corps and leaving a wide gap between them. Sickles's corps now formed an angle at a peach orchard and faced about half the Confederate army.<sup>1</sup> Meade rode out to Sickles's headquarters and remonstrated against such unnecessary exposure, whereupon Sickles offered to withdraw. But Meade expressed his fear that such a move would not be permitted by the enemy. While he was speaking the boom of cannon from Longstreet's batteries announced the opening of the second day's battle. Lee had ordered Longstreet to attack Sickles in full force. The fire was soon answered by the Union troops, and in a few minutes the fight extended from the peach orchard through a wheat field and along the whole line to the base of Little Round Top. The musketry opened with stray volleys here and there — then more and faster until there was one continuous roll, and no ear could distinguish one shot from another. Longstreet swept forward in a mag-

<sup>1</sup> Greeley's "American Conflict," Vol. II. p. 381.

nificent line of battle a mile and a half long. He pressed back the Union line, and was seriously threatening the batteries.

At the extreme left Captain Biglow commanded a Massachusetts battery. He was ordered to hold his position at all hazards until reënforced. With double charges of grape and canister again and again he tore great gaps in the advancing line, but the line reformed and pressed onward until they reached the very muzzles of his guns! Again he fires, but the heroic band must at last give way to the increasing numbers of the enemy. Biglow was wounded, half of his men were left on the bloody field; while he lost eighty out of eighty-eight horses, and four of six guns. This is a sample of the heroism displayed at Gettysburg.

But the most desperate single struggle of the day was the fight for the possession of Little Round Top. It was late in the afternoon, while the battle in the valley below was at its height, that General Warren, the chief engineer of the Army of the Potomac, happened to come upon that wild, rocky eminence. It was unoccupied at the time, and Warren quickly saw the great

importance of preventing its occupation by the enemy, for the hill was the key to the whole battle-ground west and south of Cemetery Ridge. At that moment Warren saw that Hood's division of Longstreet's corps was moving steadily toward the hill and had evidently determined to occupy it. Had he succeeded, the result would have been most disastrous to the Union army, for the enemy could then have reached the entire Union lines on the western edge of Cemetery Ridge with an enfilading fire. Warren acted with the haste of desperation. A battery commanded by Colonel Hazlitt was dragged by hand up the rugged steep and planted on the summit. At the same time Sykes's corps, hastening from Culp's Hill to the support of Sickles, was passing near by, and Warren detached a brigade under General Vincent with which to hold the coveted position. Meantime Hood's forces had come up the hill, and were now running to possess the summit. Then occurred one of the most dreadful hand-to-hand conflicts of the war — one of the kind in which men forget that they are human, and tear each other like wild beasts. The opposing forces, not having



time to reload, charged each other with the bayonet — men beat out each other's brains with clubbed muskets — the blue and the gray grappled in mortal combat and fell dead side by side — the front column of privates falling in their tracks, the officers sprung forward, seized the muskets from their dying hands, and continued the struggle! This went on for half an hour, when Hood's forces gave way and were pressed down the hillside. But they rallied and advanced again by way of a ravine on the left, and again, after a most valiant charge, were driven back at the point of the bayonet!

Little Round Top was saved to the Union army, but the cost was severe indeed. The hill was covered with hundreds of the slain. Colonels O'Rourke and Vincent were dead. General Weed was dying; and as Hazlitt was stooping to receive his last message, a sharpshooter's bullet laid him dead across the body of his friend!

During this siege, and for some hours thereafter, the battle continued in the valley below on a grander scale and with demon-like fury. Here many thousands were engaged. Sickles



would no doubt have been utterly defeated, but for the arrival of Sykes and the support he received from Hancock. As it was, his whole line was pressed back to the base of the hill from which it had advanced in the morning. Sickles had a leg shattered by a shell, necessitating amputation, while scores of his brave officers and thousands of his men lay on the field of glory when the battle ceased at nightfall. This valley has been appropriately named the Valley of Death.

Before the close of this main part of the second day's battle there was another clash of arms, fierce but of short duration, at the other extreme of the line. Lee had ordered Ewell to attack Cemetery Ridge on the north, and Culp's Hill, held by Slocum. It was late in the afternoon, almost sunset, when Ewell sent Early to make an attack on Cemetery Hill. He was repulsed only after a bloody and desperate hand-to-hand fight, in which not only muskets and bayonets were used, but rammers, clubs, and stones. Ewell's attack on Culp's Hill was more successful. After a severe struggle of half an hour the Confeder-

ate forces gained possession of part of the hill and of the valley lying toward Rock Creek. This position they held during the night.

Thus closed the second day's battle at Gettysburg. The harvest of death had been frightful. The Union loss during the two days had exceeded twenty thousand men, the Confederate loss had reached about the same figure. The Confederate army had gained an apparent advantage in forcing Sickles's advanced line back, and a real advantage in penetrating the Union breastworks on Culp's Hill. But the real Union lines, except on Culp's Hill, were unbroken. On the night of the 2d, Lee and his generals held a council of war and decided to make a grand final assault on Meade's centre next day. Against this decision, Longstreet protested in vain. His counsel was that Lee withdraw his army to the mountains, compel Meade to follow, and then turn and attack him. But Lee was encouraged by the arrival of Pickett's division and of Stewart's cavalry, and Longstreet's objections were overruled. Meade and his corps commanders had met

and made a like decision—that there should be a fight to the finish at Gettysburg.

As night overspread the valley and the hills, the weary legions in blue and in gray sank down upon the ground for a few hours' rest, that they might the better endure the terrible ordeal of the morrow.

### *The Third Day's Battle*

On July the 3d the inhabitants of Gettysburg were awakened from sleep at break of day by the roar of artillery. Long and dark lines of soldiers occupied the surrounding hills, but these, for the most part, were inactive; the battle was confined for several hours to the eastern extremity of the lines. A score of heavy guns had been massed during the night by order of Meade against the enemy on Culp's Hill, with the determination to dislodge him from the position he had gained the previous evening. After four hours of heavy firing, beginning at four o'clock in the morning, the enemy was driven from the hill and the Union line reestablished as on the day before.

✓ We turn now to the greater struggle that occurred in another part of the field at a later hour — indeed, the most famous portion of the three days' fight at Gettysburg — the ill-fated charge of Pickett on Cemetery Ridge, preceded by two hours of the heaviest cannonading ever known on the American continent.

The hour of noon had passed. Culp's Hill had been carried in the early morning hours. A fierce cavalry fight had taken place a few miles east of Rock Creek. Now there was a lull over the entire field — almost a deep silence; but it was the ominous calm that precedes the storm. Lee had been massing artillery along Seminary Ridge until the whole hill for two miles bristled with mounted cannon. At one o'clock the silence was broken by the firing of a signal gun, and instantly there was a terrific outburst from one hundred and fifty guns and the entire crest of Seminary Ridge was a line of fire. A few minutes later the Union batteries on Cemetery Hill opened with near a hundred guns, and cannon answered cannon until the hills were shaken to their base. The air was filled with

screaming shells, and it seemed as if heaven were raining fire and iron. The ground was torn and gashed by the bursting shells. Lee's fire was well directed, and many of the Union batteries were disabled. Many were the brave warriors who laid down their lives on that fatal field, and ere nightfall the old cemetery contained more dead above the ground than beneath it. For nearly two hours the artillery duel continued, when it slowly abated. But the end was not yet. The army now braced itself for the more deadly charge of infantry that was sure to follow.

The charge now made, known as Pickett's Charge, was one of the most brilliant and daring in the annals of human warfare. It reminds one of the charge of the noble Six Hundred at Balaklava, or of the brave stand of Leonidas and his heroes against the Persian host at Thermopylæ. It is said that Longstreet, seeing the hopelessness of the task and not wishing to sacrifice his brave Virginians, the flower of the army, opposed making the charge, but Lee insisted that it be made. At length, when Pickett came to Longstreet for final orders to

go, the latter simply nodded his head and burst into tears.

The Confederates, fifteen thousand strong, emerged at four o'clock from the wooded crest of Seminary Ridge in a grand double column, and began their march of a mile across the plain to the Union stronghold. In stately grandeur, with flying banners and glittering bayonets, they sweep across that fated valley. Ere they have traversed half the space a tremendous cannonade from the Union batteries pours into their devoted lines a storm of grape and canister and shell; but onward they sweep like a tidal wave. As they approach the Union front the left wing of the advancing lines, under Pettigrew, unable to stem the tempest of lead and iron, breaks and flees in disorder; but the main column under Pickett is unbroken. Great gaps are cut in their ranks by the Federal cannon; but the gaps are instantly filled with living men and the lines press on. When in musket range a terrific fire is poured into them from Hancock's infantry, but Pickett's valiant band only quicken their pace, returning the fire with volley after volley as they dash up the slope to the very



cannon's mouth! They bayonet the gunners, shoot their horses, capture their batteries. It seems for a moment that they will reach their goal, that they will capture the Union works on Cemetery Hill and split the Army of the Potomac in twain. A low stone wall, from behind which many of Hancock's men had fought, is now abandoned, and General Armistead, leading Pickett's advance guard, leaps upon the wall within the Union lines and waves the Confederate banner in frenzied momentary triumph. The next instant he falls mortally wounded—and with him fall the hopes of the slaveholders' rebellion—not yet slain, but mortally wounded. Pickett had penetrated a death-trap. In vain did he now charge with all the desperation of frenzied valor. His brave Virginians were surrounded on three sides, and volleys of musketry were poured into them in front and from the right and from the left. Hundreds fell dead on the gory field, hundreds were disabled, thousands threw up their hands and surrendered, and the remainder fled in disorder.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The losses of the two armies during the three days' fight at Gettysburg reached the frightful total of near fifty thousand

Back they went over the same route on which they had marched so proudly but an hour ago, but now only a fourth of their original number — then an organized body with orderly step, with waving banners, with high hopes of victory and glory — now a straggling mass of blood-stained, defeated soldiers fleeing a victorious foe.

Pickett's desperate assault had failed. The battle of Gettysburg was over and the Union arms were victorious. Lee could do nothing now but abandon his proposed invasion of the North and lead his army back to their familiar haunts of Virginia.

It is generally considered that the battle of Gettysburg was the turning-point, the high-water mark, of the Civil War. The victory was not a very decisive one, but, being powerfully supported by the fall of Vicksburg, which occurred at the same time, the moral effect upon

men. Of these more than six thousand fell dead upon the field of battle ; some thirty thousand were wounded and the rest made prisoners. The Union loss exceeded twenty-three thousand in all, while the Confederate loss was no doubt greater, but could never be accurately ascertained.

the Nation and the world was far-reaching indeed. It marks the end of uncertainty as to the final outcome of the Civil War. From this moment it required but little prophetic vision to foresee that the Union would survive the dreadful shock of arms, and that slavery must perish.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The space just west of the old cemetery was set apart for a National cemetery. This was dedicated on November 19, 1863, when President Lincoln made his memorable address, which is pronounced one of the brightest literary gems in the language. In this cemetery 3564 bodies were interred, some of which have since been removed. The entire battle-ground has in recent years become the property of the Government, and scattered over it are some five hundred monuments, statues, and markers, many of rare beauty. The macadamized drives about the grounds aggregate about twenty-two miles.

## CHAPTER VI

### CAUSES OF NORTHERN SUCCESS

OTHER things being equal, it is the stronger of two peoples that wins in war. But it often happens that other things are not equal. The weaker side may win through greater devotion to a cause, through superior leadership and the like. Many instances in history have proved that the victory is not always to the strong. Had this criterion of strength alone been taken in our late Civil War, the North must necessarily have been successful, for it was immeasurably stronger than the South. There were twenty-two States against eleven, twenty-two million people against nine million, one-third of whom were slaves. And further, it was the manufacturer and the farmer against the planter. This want of manufactories in the South constituted the most vital difference in the material strength of the combatants. The resources of the South, while inferior to those

of the North, were nevertheless vast and practically inexhaustible. The soil of the southern States was capable of feeding its armies for any length of time; its mineral wealth was inexhaustible; as to men for the army, the boy of twelve years in 1860 was able to bear arms in 1865, and thus the depleted ranks might have been refilled and the war prolonged for indefinite years, but for the one thing needful—the South could not work its own materials. Could the South have worked its own cotton, could it have made its munitions of war and its machinery, who can tell how long the struggle might have continued or how it might have ended? for it had all the material at hand and lacked only the ability to use it.

The South owed its inability to manufacture its own goods to slavery. Slave labor had not the brains to manufacture; it could only delve the soil. Free labor could not exist by the side of slave labor, hence the rich minerals of the South were left in the earth, and the cotton mills were built in New England and Liverpool.

Thus slavery not only brought about secession and the war, but, the war once begun, it

insured the ultimate success of the North. But the difference in resources between the two sections did not alone bring about the result. Nor was it superior generalship, or greater devotion of its soldiery. The North was vaster in extent than the South; it had more men and more money; it could work its own mines, make its own guns and clothing and machinery. These were valuable factors indeed in bringing victory; but there were other causes that contributed very greatly to northern success, the most important of which was

*The Blockade.*

It was on April the 19th, that ominous date in American history which witnessed the first bloodshed of the Revolution and of the Civil War, which witnessed also the proclamation of peace by General Washington in 1783, and the resolution by Congress in 1898 authorizing the President to make war upon Spain in defence of downtrodden Cuba—it was on this day in 1861 that Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a blockade of the ports of the seceded States.

The blockade seemed at first almost ridicu-



lous; many did not take it seriously, and there was adequate ground for such a view of it. The United States navy at that time consisted of but forty-two wooden vessels, three-fourths of which were in foreign waters — scattered through various parts of the world. The blockade certainly seemed open to the charge of being a paper blockade. Three thousand miles of coast to be blockaded by a nation whose entire navy could not have withstood one modern first-class battleship! Was it a great game of bluff? or was it the deliberate decision of a great mind?

Cortez, lying half dead with wounds and surrounded by a few half-hearted, defeated followers, was planning to take the Mexican capital — and he did it. His decision would have seemed folly to one who did not know the man. Hannibal determined to conquer Rome with a single army — and almost accomplished it. Lincoln proclaimed a blockade of three thousand miles of coast, and had no means to carry it into effect. The South laughed at his pretensions. The world was undecided whether it was the work of a dreamer or of a

genius. Lincoln was still new to the world and he had not yet been classified. For some months the proclamation had but little effect on the southern coast. But ere long the vessels began to arrive from foreign waters, merchant vessels were fitted out and pressed into the service of the Government, the northern shipyards were in operation day and night turning out new vessels. First one port and then another was actually blockaded by armed vessels of war. At the beginning of the year 1862 an expedition fitted out in New York was sent southward under the command of General Burnside and Commodore Goldsborough. Albemarle Sound was soon closed to the commerce of the world. Newbern, the chief port of North Carolina, next fell into the hands of the northern fleet. Fort Macon met the same fate. ' Meantime the great Farragut had closed the Mississippi River. These operations all took place within the first year after the blockade had been instituted. The next year Charleston was hemmed in by a cordon of northern vessels, and the next witnessed the fall of Mobile, and that port henceforth was

closed. Thus month by month the grip of the blockade tightened, and the business of the blockade-runner became a perilous business. The freight rates charged by these runners rose to five hundred dollars per ton, and this meant, of course, that no bulky goods were conveyed in them. By the close of 1864 the Confederate States were hemmed in so effectually that they had little communication with the outside world. Great stacks of cotton piled along the seaboard could be bought for four cents a pound, while it was worth two dollars and fifty cents at Liverpool. A ton of salt, worth seven dollars and a half at Nassau, was worth seventeen hundred dollars in gold at Richmond. The South was in the greatest need of arms and many other articles, but it had not learned to manufacture them, nor could they be had from abroad. It was not possible for the people of the South to begin manufacturing on any great scale at this time, when nearly all their best men were in the army. They were therefore peculiarly distressed by the blockade.

It was not chiefly the depletion of the armies

that weakened the South. It was the blockade that shut off the Confederate States from the markets of the world, that prevented the sale of cotton and tobacco, that bankrupted the treasury. It was the blockade, more than anything else, that brought about the ultimate exhaustion and collapse of the South. Had the markets of the world been open to the South, its conquest by the North would hardly have been possible.

### *The Border States*

The border States were those slave States lying nearest the free States—Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri. Sometimes, also, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas were included among the border States, as distinguished from the cotton or Gulf States. During the war, however, the term usually referred to the four slave States that did not secede from the Union,—namely, Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri. Of the fifteen slave States, therefore, but eleven seceded. As between free and slave States, one of the latter, Delaware, was looked upon as almost a neutral. The form of slavery in

this State was mild, nor was the size of the State such as to give it great importance in the great conflict; but it was confidently expected by the South that the other three border States would join the Confederacy. In this hope they were disappointed, and in this fact lay one of the weaknesses of the South, and one of the important causes of northern success.

It was the skill of President Lincoln, above all things, that saved the border States from secession. When a large portion of the northern people were clamoring for immediate emancipation, the far-sighted President hesitated. So long did he hesitate, that many grew weary with waiting. Exasperated, they denounced him as slow and phlegmatic, and unfit to fill the great office at such a momentous period. They did not know that the sagacious Lincoln was hesitating for the wisest of reasons, one of which was his fear of offending the border States and driving them into the Confederacy. When the Hotspurs in Congress and elsewhere were denouncing the slaveholder and the institution of slavery in unmeasured terms, Lincoln was holding conferences with the leading men



— slaveholders — of the border States. He urged them to lead their States to accept compensated emancipation, while at the same time he was planning to lead Congress to offer it. This judicious course of the President was very effective in winning the good will of the border States and in holding them in the Union.

If, however, these four States had joined the Confederacy, the North would still have been much stronger than the South—greater in extent, greater in population and wealth. Nevertheless, the South would have gained an immense advantage. The material gain would have been great, the moral gain still greater. Had the entire fifteen slave States presented a solid front to the world, they would have won a respect that they could not do as it was. If the countries of Europe were contemplating a recognition of the Confederacy, they must have been checked by the fact that the slave States were not united. Again, throughout the North there was a strong feeling in various sections that the seceding States should be permitted to depart in peace. Horace Greeley and Henry Ward Beecher, with many lesser lights, shared this



feeling. They were lovers of the Union, but their love of peace was still greater, and they would have seen the Union divided rather than enter into a bloody war to save it. Had all the slave States been united, and thus a still greater war been necessary to preserve the Union, this depart-in-peace feeling would have been much stronger and more widespread in the North—perhaps even so strong that public opinion would have prevented the raising of armies. On the whole, it is certain that one of the great causes of defeat to the South is found in the fact that the border States adhered to the Union.

### *Finances*

A business man must be a financier. A nation must be a financier. However well a business man may know his business, however skilfully he may manage his employees, however great his industry and devotion to duty, if he has not a keen sense of financial management, he will go to the wall. A nation may have vast resources and great armies and able commanders; but if it cannot skilfully handle its finances, all these will count for little in the

prosecution of a great war. No government is secure unless it rests on a sound financial basis. This is true for all times, but preëminently so for a time of war.

During the eventful years of the early sixties the North achieved a great success, not only in the triumph of its arms, in the success of the blockade, in the holding of border States, but also in the management of its money matters; and herein lay one of the secrets of its strength, one of the prime factors that brought victory in the end.

During the year 1861 the credit of the United States was very low. When, near the close of that year, the gigantic struggle reached its height, the outlook for the Union was gloomy; and if the Union was to be shattered into fragments, who would venture to invest his gold with such a government? The financial world stood aloof. The markets of Europe were closed to our bonds. Germany purchased a few; France and England refused to touch them. Moreover, our expenses exceeded a million dollars a day, and if all the coin in the country had been poured into the treasury, it would not have

supplied the need of the Government for three months. At this critical time the Midas touch of a great financier, Salmon P. Chase, began to be felt. Under his leadership Congress in February, 1862, authorized the issuance of one hundred and fifty million dollars in notes, which came to be called greenbacks. This was increased from time to time until it reached an aggregate of four hundred and fifty millions. This paper depreciated somewhat below the gold standard, it is true, but the people received it gladly, and never seemed to doubt that the Government would ultimately redeem it dollar for dollar — and so it did.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The wisdom of the Government in issuing paper money irredeemable in coin at the time is questioned by many leading financiers and historians. Ordinarily such a course would certainly be unwise ; but in such a great emergency, when large amounts of money are absolutely necessary and specie is not to be had, such a course is permissible. The Government had not the specie at the time to redeem its notes ; but it had vast wealth in lands and mines and manufactories, and, above all, it had the confidence of the people. If a people are willing to accept their government's paper, trusting to its future redemption, who can come forward and say the government has no right to issue it ? It is not always possible for a government to maintain a gold standard in time of war.

The act of Congress, however, making the greenbacks legal

Another brilliant financial stroke was the creating of the National bank in 1863 to take the place of the State banks and private banks.

A National bank is obliged to deposit United States bonds for all the paper it issues, and, if the bank fails, the bonds protect the holder of the notes from loss. Thus the Government, by laying its hand on the people's money, that issued by their local institutions, and becoming responsible for it, strengthened the confidence on every hand.

The credit of the United States rose as the war progressed, especially after midsummer, 1863, when all the world saw that the final triumph of the North was no longer uncertain. This confidence, inspired on all sides, enabled the Government to secure all the money and supplies it needed. How great the contrast between this condition and the condition of the

tender and thus forcing their use in private contracts, was unnecessary, and, if not unconstitutional, at least extra-constitutional; nor was it necessary to insure the acceptance of the paper by the people. The real value of the notes depended, not on the Legal Tender Act, but on the Government's stamp, its receiving them in payments to itself, and in the people's confidence in its ability and disposition to redeem them.

South! The Confederacy issued paper money also in large sums, but, owing to the gloomy outlook during the last two years of the war, and to the isolation of the South occasioned by the blockade, its paper money depreciated until it became worthless. This vast difference between the financial bases of the two sections had much to do with the success of the one and the failure of the other.

### *Foreign Relations*

Foreign relations and foreign commerce are necessary to our modern civilization. The increased wants of war times make this doubly true. The failure of the South in the Civil War, was, as before stated, due to its want of foreign relations more than to any other cause. The North, on the other hand, might have dispensed with all foreign commerce and still succeeded, because of its ability to supply its own wants. There is another phase of the subject, however, that presents a different aspect. It was absolutely necessary that the United States Government prevent the recognition of the Confederate Government by the European powers. In this it succeeded, and



herein lies the great importance of our foreign relations during the war.

Had any great European power recognized the South, it might have been fatal to the Union. If England, for example, had recognized the independence of a portion of the United States, it would have been necessary for the latter to declare war against that country. What would such a thing have meant? Simply this: that England would have espoused the cause of the South, and would have poured her armies, her munitions of war, her food supplies and clothing, into the southern States without limit; for our blockade could not have withstood the assaults of any one of the great powers of Europe. The southerners would have found immediate sale for their cotton and tobacco; their armies would have been well equipped, their treasury filled, and their little navy augmented by the powerful navy of England. What would have been the result? Could the Union have been saved and slavery destroyed? We hardly think so.

Again it was the sagacity of the great war



President that saved the Union. At the very beginning of hostilities, when England and France so promptly acknowledged the belligerent rights of the Confederacy, even before our minister, Charles Francis Adams, could reach London, President Lincoln decided to pocket the insult and continue our friendly relations with those countries.

When the *Trent* affair stirred public feeling on both sides of the Atlantic; when the American people rejoiced at the clever capture of the Confederate ministers, and the British public was shocked to indignation at the boldness of the act; when, a little later, the British Government demanded the release of the two Confederate prisoners and gave every indication of its readiness to mobilize armies; when the American people, remembering the impressment of seamen in the early part of the century, and believing that British sentiment was unfriendly to the Union cause, began to clamor for a war with England; when even the wise and conservative Seward for once lost his head and joined in this cry, — then it was that Lincoln, with the

stroke of a master hand, and for once without consulting public opinion, settled the whole matter and averted all danger by quietly acceding to the British demand and releasing the prisoners.

Again, when the President held under advisement the Emancipation Proclamation, when many urged him to issue it, and, for the best of reasons, as above noted, he hesitated, he at length issued it, knowing, as he said, that it would not bring freedom to the slaves, one of his avowed objects was to produce a moral effect on Europe. And he succeeded. The countries of Europe at first generally sympathized with the South. The primary reason for this was that they desired to trade with the cotton States on a free-trade basis, and this would have been their privilege had the South succeeded in the war. Many believed also that a feeling of jealousy, on account of the marvellous growth of the great Republic, and a desire to see it divided, played a considerable part in formulating European sympathy with the South. But there was one thing that checked southern sympathy from

abroad — slavery. The people of Europe disliked human bondage, and this doubtless prevented the early recognition of the Confederacy by the European Powers.

As long as the North fought for the Union alone it received little sympathy from across the Atlantic. Europe cared little about preserving the Union. But as soon as the North proclaimed to the world that it was battling against slavery as well as against rebellion, the sympathies of mankind were turned in its favor. President Lincoln, therefore, dealt a master-stroke when he brought forth his great proclamation.

Still, again, it was Lincoln that practically chose Andrew Johnson as his running mate in 1864. The choice was unfortunate, as it proved, but the motive, the object in making it, was wise and thoughtful. Lincoln saw that, by choosing this Tennessean from the very heart of the Confederacy for the second office in the Government, it would be shown to the world that the country was not in reality divided, but simply engaged in putting down a great rebellion.

The services of Abraham Lincoln to the country during the war are beyond all calculation. It is certainly true, judging from a human point of view, that the Revolution could not have succeeded without Washington. Many believe also that without Lincoln the slaveholder's rebellion would have succeeded, and that the United States would have been severed in twain.

## CHAPTER VII

### RECONSTRUCTION

WHEN Lord Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown in 1781 and the long and dreary war was over — a prolonged shout of gladness filled the land. The joy of the people was unbounded at their success in throwing off the British yoke, and they little realized that to secure a substantial government at home and a national standing in the eyes of the world would require a far longer, and scarcely less fierce, struggle than the one through which they had just passed.

The war between the States ended with Appomattox. The struggle had been desperate and long, but it was not over. The bloodshed, the field-fighting, was over, but there was another conflict at hand, equally fierce of its kind, and it was to continue even longer than the struggle with arms had continued. This period is known as the reconstruction period. It covered the six years immediately following the war, and within

this time occurred the rupture between the President and Congress, which is treated in another chapter.

### *A New Problem*

At the close of the Civil War a problem confronted the American Government that had no precedent in history, namely, the status of the seceded States and how to get them back into their proper places in the Union. One of the first questions that arose was whether these States were really out of the Union or not. Much eloquence was wasted on this abstract theme, some taking the ground that the acts of secession were null and void, others that as a matter of fact the Union was really broken up for a time and afterward made whole again. Professor Goldwin Smith, one of the profoundest of modern writers, pronounces the war, not a civil war, but a war between two nations — one short-lived, it is true, but nevertheless a nation with all the machinery of self-government.<sup>1</sup> From the standpoint of *fact* this view is certainly correct. But for once we must brush aside actual fact and look at the matter in another light.

<sup>1</sup>See his "United States," p. 249.



From the standpoint of constitutional law, the seceding States *must* not have been out of the Union. If they were, Andrew Johnson the Tennessean was not a resident or a citizen of the United States, and of course was not a legal President. If they were, every child born in the seceded States during the war period was alien born and none is eligible to the presidency.

Hence we are forced to take the ground that the southern States were not out of the Union, and that secession did not sever, but only suspended, their relation to the United States. The later Supreme Court decision that our country is "an indestructible Union composed of indestructible States"<sup>1</sup> is sound in law, and will ever be so in fact unless some future revolution proves successful.

As far, however, as reconstruction was concerned, there was little difference which theory one held. The great question was how to get the straying sisters back into the family. On this subject there was a wide difference of opinion among those by whom the work was to be done. One party favored readmitting the

<sup>1</sup>Texas *vs.* White, 1868.

southern States as noiselessly and easily as possible. This class, if they had any feeling of malice toward the South, were willing to throw it aside at the close of hostilities. To this class belonged President Lincoln, Secretary Seward, and Generals Grant and Sherman; it also included many other broad-minded, leading men of the North who had done all in their power to put down the rebellion.

The other party was more radical. It was composed of men who nursed their wrath to keep it warm, who wished to punish the South further after defeating them in battle, who refused to forgive the southern people until they would confess themselves wholly in the wrong and abjectly beg forgiveness.

This was demanding too much. The people of the South were undoubtedly sincere in their devotion to the cause in which they fought. Granted that they were honest in their convictions, could it be expected that they would instantly abandon them on being defeated by force of arms? Could they be expected to trample the graves and execrate the memory of their fathers who had so recently fallen in

the cause in which they believed so fondly? No student of human nature could expect such a thing. The people of the South are now, with rare exceptions, content with the results of the war, they rejoice that the Union was not divided; but this condition could not reasonably have been looked for in 1865, nor was it possible for Congress, by any methods of coercion, to bring about such a condition. Matters of the heart and of the conscience are wholly beyond the reach of legislative acts. Many of the leading members of Congress did not realize this great truth. Many seemed to be peculiarly wanting in the magnanimity toward a fallen foe that characterizes a great mind.

And further, it was bad public policy to drive the best blood of the South into further opposition by severe measures. Said General Sherman: "I perceived that we had the unbounded respect of our armed enemies. . . . I am sure that at the close of the Civil War the Confederate army embraced the best governed, the best disposed, the most reliable men in the South; and I would have used them in reconstruction instead of driving them into a hopeless opposi-

tion." In this light Mr. Lincoln also viewed the matter; but not so with many of the leaders in Congress, and the result was a serious rupture between the executive and the legislative branches of the Government.

*President Lincoln and Congress at Variance*

President Lincoln wielded, during the war, almost imperial power. No Englishman, since Oliver Cromwell, says James Bryce, has had such authority. Our Constitution clothes the President with a war power that is almost without limit. Lincoln used this vast power to save the Union, but there is no evidence that selfish ambition or motives of revenge entered into his action at all. As he had full command of the army and navy of the United States to put down the rebellion, he also felt that it was his duty and lay within his authority to make overtures to the seceded States with a view of restoring their relations to the Union. Accordingly, as early as December, 1863, he issued a proclamation offering amnesty with full property rights, except as to slaves, to all (except certain leading classes) if they would take the oath

of allegiance to the United States. He also declared that a State might resume its relations with the Government when one-tenth of the voters of 1860, having taken the oath, would set up a State government. At the same time he cautiously stated that the admission of their senators and representatives in Congress "rested with the two Houses, and not to any extent with the Executive."

No one who knew the man could doubt that the motives of Lincoln were of the best, and that what he did was meant for the highest public good. It is certain that he bore no personal malice toward the Southern people. "I shall do nothing in malice. What I deal with is too vast for malicious dealing," were his words.

Louisiana was the first to take advantage of the President's offer. In February, 1864, an election of the loyal whites of the State took place. Mr. Hahn was chosen governor and members of Congress were elected. In April a State convention, called for the purpose, framed a new State constitution in which slavery was forever forbidden in the State. But little over

eight thousand votes had been cast in the election — a little more than one-tenth of the Presidential vote of the State in 1860. The weakness of this new government lay in the fact that it could not sustain itself without military support.<sup>1</sup> The plan as inaugurated by Mr. Lincoln was known henceforth as the Louisiana plan.

While this work was going on in Louisiana a similar movement was in progress in Arkansas. A governor was elected, an antislavery constitution adopted, and senators and representatives elected to Congress.

But there was one item that the President had not taken into account when he directed and encouraged these States to do as they did, and that was the temper of Congress. It was soon discovered that both the Senate and House were unfriendly, not to say hostile, to Lincoln's "shorthand method of reconstruction," as they called it. When, therefore, the senators-elect from Arkansas presented themselves to the Senate they were peremptorily refused admission, the opposition being led by Charles Sumner. Soon after this Congress passed a bill

<sup>1</sup> Blaine's "Twenty Years of Congress," Vol. II. p. 40.



giving its views of reconstruction. This bill was far more severe and exacting than was the Louisiana plan. The chief provisions of this measure were, that the President appoint a provisional governor for each rebellious State; that this governor, after all resistance to the United States had ceased within the bounds of the State, should submit a test oath to the white male citizens to support the Constitution of the United States, and not until after a *majority* of them had taken this oath could they form a State constitution. When a constitution was adopted, the main features of which were mapped out in the Congressional bill, the governor was to certify the fact to the President, after which the latter should recognize the State government *after obtaining the consent of Congress*.

This measure was in itself a severe condemnation of the policy of the President. It was passed and sent to him on July 4, 1864, the last day of the session. But Mr. Lincoln was not in the humor to suffer such a rebuke from Congress. He treated the bill to a pocket veto.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Constitution provides that a congressional bill must be signed or vetoed by the President within ten days after

A few days after the adjournment of Congress he issued a proclamation in which he stated that he was not prepared to declare the governments already adopted in Louisiana and Arkansas set aside, nor was he prepared to acknowledge the competency of Congress to make the exactions as contained in the bill. Had Congress been in session a most serious breach between it and the President would have been precipitated; but the members had gone to their homes and would not meet again for several months. Moreover, the country was in the midst of a presidential campaign. Mr. Lincoln had been renominated, and any hostile demonstration against him from the leaders of his party might have proved disastrous. Most of them remained passive, especially when they discovered that the hearts of the people were with the President.

But there were two notable exceptions. Senator Benjamin Wade of Ohio and Representative

its passage. If he does neither, it will become a law without his signature. This, however, does not apply when Congress adjourns within the ten days. If in that case the President withholds his signature, the bill does not become law. This is called a pocket veto.

Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, respective chairmen of the Senate and House committees on rebellious States, came out in most vigorous protest against the action of the President. This paper was published broadcast over the signatures of the two statesmen. It was a remarkable document. It arraigned Mr. Lincoln in the most caustic and severe language, reminding him that the Union men in Congress "would not submit to be impeached of rash and unconstitutional legislation," and that he "must confine himself to his executive duties—to obey and execute, and not to make the laws."

A short time after this paper had been published Mr. Davis sought a renomination for Congress, but was defeated. This, in slaveholding Maryland, was an index to the reception of the protest by the country. It served to rouse Lincoln's friends on all sides, and doubtless contributed to his great majority at the polls.

On the convening of Congress in December the President wisely refrained from making any reference to the recent controversy or to the subject of reconstruction. Later in the session

Congress passed a joint resolution declaring certain States (Louisiana and Arkansas) not entitled to representation in the electoral college. This was intended as a slap at the President, but he headed them off by signing the resolution and stating at the same time that he considered it wholly unnecessary, as Congress already had the sole power of counting electoral votes. His language was sarcastic and unanswerable.

President Lincoln adhered to his plan of reconstruction with the greatest tenacity. In a speech made on April 11, he reviewed at length his Louisiana plan, stating just what he had done and why he did it. He explained how unwise it would be to reject and spurn the loyal people of the South in their endeavors to bring their erring States back into the Union fold. With these words he closed: "It may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper." But his new announcement was never made. Four days after he gave the promise the great President was dead.

*The New President and the Old Plan*

At the moment when this quarrel between the Executive and Congress was assuming alarming proportions Andrew Johnson stepped forth upon the public stage as the chief officer in the land. Twice before this had the Vice-President succeeded to the presidency, and in each case the policy of the Government on the leading public questions was radically changed. And it seemed indeed that the same would be true in the present case, for at first Johnson did little but breathe out threatenings against the leaders of the rebellion. His language was extravagant and undignified, and marked a painful contrast with that of the ever humane, the ever self-possessed Lincoln.

But Johnson's attitude of hostility toward the South was of short duration. He came under the influence of a master mind, and, according to the inevitable law of nature, the less yielded to the greater. William H. Seward had been retained by him as secretary of state. Seward, like Lincoln, was too great, too magnanimous, to entertain a feeling of spite toward the con-



quered States, and it is believed that he had almost as much to do in originating the Louisiana plan of reconstruction as had the departed President himself.

Seward, for long years before the war, had been hated and execrated at the South above all men. He had been looked upon as the embodiment of Republicanism, of all that is evil and hateful to the slaveholder; and even now, at the moment when that other noble soul met his fate, at a moment when he was striving, at the risk of sacrificing his popularity in the North, to make the pathway of the erring southern sisters easy to retrace, he was attacked upon his sick bed by a half-crazed sympathizer with the cause of disunion, and stabbed and gashed until life was almost gone. Had there been a grain of littleness in Seward's soul, it would now have gained the mastery; his wrath would have been roused to vengeance against a people for whose welfare he had labored so faithfully, and was rewarded by an attempt to assassinate him by one of their number. But Seward was too great to be little. Recovering from his wounds and resum-



ing his place in the cabinet, he advocated the same mild reconstruction plan for which he had labored before.

It was Seward who now took Andrew Johnson aside and whispered something in his ear, and from this time forth Johnson was a changed man. No more do we hear his violent threats; on the other hand, he took up the thread where Lincoln had left off and went even farther, perhaps, than the latter would have gone in his conciliatory attitude toward the South.

President Johnson began his new régime by issuing his great amnesty proclamation on May 29, in which pardon was offered to all who had been in rebellion (except certain specified classes) on taking an oath to support the Constitution and laws of the United States.

This presidential proclamation was accompanied on the same day by another step of still greater importance—the appointment of a provisional governor of North Carolina, and giving into his hands the reconstructing of the civil government of the State. The governor was carefully instructed as to how to proceed

and what to do, but in our brief space we cannot dwell on these details. Within a few weeks after this similar action had been taken with reference to all the seceded States, except the four that had already set up governments under Lincoln's authority according to the Louisiana plan. These four, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Virginia, were now recognized as restored to their proper relation in the Union. Thus, by the middle of July, three months after the death of Lincoln, his successor had the whole plan of reconstruction in operation in every southern State. Congress was not in session and would not meet for several months. The President had sought no advice from the legislative branch. Encouraged by the example set by Lincoln and by the advice of Seward, he came to believe that it lay within his duty and authority to readmit the southern States single handed. It is not to be believed that he meant to offend Congress or to alienate his own party. He reminds us rather of a child performing a work in the absence of a parent who thought him unable to do it, then bringing the finished

work to the latter and saying, "You thought I couldn't do it; but it was not so difficult as you thought." So to rehabilitate the southern States was considered a vast work, nor was there any model in the history of nations that could be used as a pattern. But Andrew Johnson, the President who had risen from the tailor's bench, the President who had scarcely learned to read when he reached adult life, the President who had not been elected to the office by the people, but had inherited it through the death of another—this man now accomplished the great task in a few weeks, and triumphantly laid the finished work before the country.

But Johnson reckoned without his host. If Congress had the temerity to oppose Lincoln, would it not far more readily set its hand against this accidental President? Lincoln might have won in defiance of Congress. His power with the people was vast. He had won the Northern heart, and was loved as few Presidents have ever been loved. Had Congress continued recalcitrant, he might have successfully appealed to the higher court, the

great national tribunal—the people. But Johnson was nobody's idol. He had not won the heart of the people, and there was none to whom he could appeal. Moreover, Lincoln was a man of consummate tact, and when assaulted by his enemies, he was able to evade the blows or to neutralize their force with his incomparable wit. Johnson lacked all this; he was brave and pugnacious, but wholly wanting in tact.

On the meeting of Congress in December it was at once seen that the members were unwilling to accept Andrew Johnson as their guide, and that his entire work of reconstruction would be overthrown. The reason for their taking this extreme position was that the South, as they claimed, was still unregenerate, and had not brought forth fruit meet for repentance. And there was certainly some ground for this claim.

Some of the southern States, believing that Johnson's scheme of reconstruction would be accepted by the country, and thus expecting to get back into the Union with little friction and almost no humiliation to themselves, began

to frame laws against the freedmen that were little short of vicious. In Mississippi a law was passed providing that young negroes who had no home or visible support be apprenticed, the males until twenty-one and the females until eighteen years of age. The master was to have power to inflict moderate corporal punishment and to reclaim fugitives. Vagrants were to be arrested and fined, and if unable to pay the fine, hired out to the highest bidder. In South Carolina a similar code was adopted, and to this was added a law that no person of color should be a mechanic without paying a fee of ten dollars a year, or a storekeeper or peddler except by paying one hundred dollars a year. No negro could enter the State without giving bonds for his good behavior. In Louisiana negroes were to sign, before January 10, each year, a written contract to labor a year; and any one breaking such contract was to labor on public works. These are samples of legislation in several of the southern States just before the meeting of Congress in December, 1865. It was necessary indeed for the South to take some special action in regard to the newly

emancipated race. The race was landless, penniless, without education, and incapable of self-government. The South had before it a vast problem to solve, and had it used moderation at the beginning, it would have enlisted the sympathy of the world ; but the laws above mentioned, with numerous others, were so palpably discriminating against the black man that the framers of them placed a decided check on the rising sympathies in their favor. Their action seemed to many little short of an attempt to reënslave the black man.

This attitude toward the negro as shown in several southern States became a powerful stimulus to Congress in demolishing the work of Andrew Johnson, and in instituting reconstruction on an entirely different and more radical basis.

When Congress met the members-elect from the lately rebellious States were present and expected to be admitted, but in the roll-call of the House those States were not even mentioned. Immediately on the election of a speaker, Thaddeus Stevens, who from this time to his death, three years later, was the acknowl-



edged leader of the House, moved that a joint committee of the House and Senate be appointed to inquire into the condition of the seceded States, and until this committee make its report no member be received by either House from those States. All debate was shut off by the "previous question," and the resolution was carried even before the annual message had been received. This was the first step toward congressional reconstruction, and in taking it Congress utterly ignored the work of Johnson. Indeed, they proceeded just as if no such personage as the President of the United States existed. The Senate, led by Sumner, was equally decided in its action. Johnson, instead of bowing to the will of Congress, showed fight. He lost his temper, his dignity, his self-control, and as the contest grew more open and bitter he stooped to make personal attacks in public speeches on the leading legislators, naming Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner, and Wendell Phillips as the leading disunionists of the North, and pretending to believe that these were desirous of having him assassinated. This was a departure from ordinary presidential

dignity so radical as to produce a shock. It served to cement the President's opponents against him, and rendered all future reconciliation out of the question.

### *The Great Reconstruction Act*

It is impossible in our brief chapter to follow minutely the great debates in Congress on this great subject of reconstruction. This debate was one of the longest and most exciting in the history of Congress. It began in the House on December 18, when Mr. Stevens made a radical speech in which he declared that the seceded States were nothing more than conquered territory; they were practically dead States,<sup>1</sup> and must be readmitted as new territory or be held in subjection at the will of their conquerors. Stevens was answered a few days

<sup>1</sup> Stevens was extremely radical. In a speech at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, he advocated confiscating the property of all rebels worth \$10,000 or upward, or who owned two hundred acres of land or more—the land to be divided among the negroes and the money to be used in paying the National debt. He also favored adopting the Thirteenth Amendment without counting the seceded States. But Congress was unwilling to follow him to such extremes.

later by Henry J. Raymond, the brilliant founder and editor of the *New York Times*. Raymond was the warm friend of Seward, and his object was to divide the Republican party in the House of Representatives, and to lead a portion of it to the support of the Administration. In this he was not successful.

In the Senate the winter was occupied with the same subject, the majority of the Republicans, led by the two Massachusetts senators, Charles Sumner and Henry Wilson, taking a decided stand against the President. The long session of Congress wore away and little was done. Congress had proposed the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution and had made its adoption by the southern States the condition of their restoration. This amendment forbade the payment of any debt contracted through rebellion against the Union by the United States or by any State; it defined citizenship, obliterating the color line; it held out a strong inducement to the States to enfranchise the negro by reducing the representation in Congress in accordance with any abridgment of the right to vote by a State of any class of

citizens; and on the whole it practically transferred the first allegiance of the citizen from his State to the United States.

One of the eleven wanderers, Tennessee, took advantage of this invitation to get back into the fold. The rest held aloof. The summer passed. The congressional elections in the autumn of 1866 produced a large majority against the Administration. But Andrew Johnson was not the man to listen to admonition from any source when his mind was set on anything. Had Johnson, on learning the result of the elections, bowed himself to the great master, the people, and said, Thy will be done, and then modified his policy in accordance with that will, his name in American history would now have a meaning that it can never have. But Johnson adhered tenaciously to his plans. The southern States took courage. They seemed to believe that the President would win in the end, and the entire ten, through their respective legislatures, deliberately rejected the Fourteenth Amendment.

Congress looked upon this as a defiance of its power, a declaration of war, and from this

time the battle became more desperate. Congress tightened its grip. The feeling against the South rose in parts of the North until it reached almost the pitch attained in 1861.

It was in February, 1867, that Thaddeus Stevens moved in the House the great Reconstruction Act, which provided that the ten southern States be divided into five military districts, and that an officer with an army be sent into each district and entirely supplant the civil governments already there. This bill was debated in House and Senate for some weeks, amended, passed, sent to the President, vetoed, and repassed on March 2, and two days later the Thirty-ninth Congress expired. But instead of taking the usual vacation of nine months, it was resolved that the Fortieth Congress meet at the moment when the old Congress expired. This was done to head off the President, for it was believed that he would not carry out the late enactments satisfactorily, if left wholly in his hands.

Before the close of March a supplementary reconstruction bill was passed, as the first was incomplete. This second bill directed the mili-



tary governor of each district to make a registration of all the male citizens of the several States, submit to them a prescribed oath, and to call an election for a constitutional convention. At this election only those taking the oath were permitted to vote. If they voted to call a convention, and this convention framed a State constitution in conformity with the provision of the Fourteenth Amendment, and this constitution was ratified by the people and afterward approved by Congress, said State would therefore be readmitted into the Union, after its legislature had also ratified the Fourteenth Amendment.

Within a year and a half after thus placing the South under military control, seven of the ten States had complied with the conditions and were readmitted to the Union. Three however, Virginia, Mississippi, and Texas, still held aloof, and by so doing they denied themselves the opportunity of taking part in the presidential election of 1868. And more, the Fifteenth Amendment was now before the people, and the three hesitating States were obliged to ratify it before reëntering the Union. This



they eventually did, and all were readmitted before the close of the year 1870. Meantime, however, the legislature of Georgia had forfeited the claim of that State to membership by pronouncing the negro ineligible to hold office. This act had to be repealed, and it was not until January, 1871, that all the seceding States were represented in Congress.

Thus at last reconstruction was accomplished. The problem to be solved had been a momentous one. It had engendered a bitterness of feeling scarcely surpassed during the war. It had brought about more drastic legislation than our country had before known in time of peace. But now it was finished, the great war was over, slavery had perished, and all the States had again resumed their normal position in the Government, and all the people rejoiced. But matters were not yet all right in the South.

### *Carpet-baggers and Scalawags*

When reconstruction was fully accomplished and the military army withdrawn from the South, there was yet much to be done. The newly admitted States had to be governed and

somebody must take the lead and fill the offices. The old antebellum leaders in politics had also been leaders in rebellion, and they were now disabled from taking part in the governments of their respective States; they were not yet pardoned. The freedmen were not fitted to lead in governmental affairs, and the outcome was that a class of unscrupulous adventurers from the North, packing up their worldly goods in a carpet-bag, it was said, went to the South, won the negro voter by their blandishments, and soon had the State governments under their control. These men were called the "carpet-baggers."

The carpet-bag governments, with few exceptions, were corrupt and scandalous. The State treasuries were plundered, after which bonds were issued and enormous State debts contracted. In South Carolina the public debt rose from five million to thirty million dollars in four years, and there was nothing of importance to show for the expenditure of the money. Several other States were similarly plundered. The negroes were easily led into the corrupt business of looting the treasuries, but the car-

pet-bagger always managed to get the lion's share. Here and there an unscrupulous rebel would join the thieving gang for the plunder there was in it. Such were called "scalawags."

The respectable whites of the South stood aghast at the further impoverishing of their already bankrupt States. Some sulked in their tents and refused even to protest against it; some formed a secret organization known as the Ku Klux Klan and through it wreaked vengeance on the black voter. The carpet-bag governments were under National protection. The Republican party as a whole was blamed, whereas only a comparative few were guilty. The result was that the white Republicans of the South, and they numbered many thousands, were alienated from the party. The seceded States had furnished at least one hundred thousand white Union men of the "Parson" Brownlow type. Most of these at the close of the war adhered to the Republican party; but now, almost to a man, they turned fiercely against that party and joined the Democrats. From this time on for many years the South

was known as the "solid" South, and it was the carpet-bag rule, above all other causes, that made it solid.

### *The Race Problem*

On the disappearance of carpet-bag rule the southern States were soon again in the hands of the white men. This was the most natural thing, even where the blacks outnumbered them. Had the black race, just emerging from centuries of bondage and of gross ignorance, continued to govern their former masters as well as themselves, a spectacle would have been presented to the world without a parallel in human history. The white race had labored for centuries to attain self-government; and besides the whites of the South owned nineteen-twentieths of all the property, and more. Could it be expected that all the brains and wealth of a State be governed by a homeless class of men who paid less than one per cent of the taxes, and who knew not the first principles even of self-government? Such a thing is altogether unknown in the history of human government.

England rules India, not by numbers, but by brains. However much we may deplore the fact that the black man was denied a fair vote in the South, and that injustice was often done him, the result on the whole was the only possible, natural result. Wherever intelligence and property on the one hand come into contact with ignorance and poverty on the other, the former will govern,—honestly perhaps, if possible, but nevertheless it will govern. The writer is not giving his opinion as to what ought to be, but simply hard facts as they are in the South, and as they would be in the North or anywhere else with the same environment. The black man can become equal to the white man in the government of the South only when he makes himself an equal force in civilization.

Again, the social relation of the races in the South is a problem that the South itself must work out. It cannot be done by legislation or by military pressure. It is folly to attempt to draw an arbitrary line and enforce its adoption. Nature has already drawn the line.

This social problem in the South is a deli-

cate and serious one. For a third of a century since the war there have been jostlings and fitting and refitting, adjusting and re-adjusting of the two races, but the problem is by no means fully solved. Perhaps it can never be that the two races stand together socially. Why should it be so? The white man is not at home in the colored man's drawing-room, nor *vice versa*. Let them come together in harmony in governmental and business affairs, but let the social line that Nature has drawn be respected. Let the black man elevate his own society and be content with it. Why should he not then be as proud of the society in which he moves as his white neighbor is of his? Until this natural difference between the races is properly recognized, the great problem cannot be solved.

The last two amendments to the Constitution place the black man on the same legal footing with his white brother. His school advantages are generally good. What more can be done for him? Neither constitutions nor congresses can legislate him into social position. He must make that for himself.



The future of the negro rests largely in his own hands. The great curse of the race today is not a want of a free ballot, but a want of ambition, a want of aspiration to do something and to be somebody.

Many put little value on their freedom;<sup>1</sup> others value it for the license it gives them. Liberty is a priceless blessing to the aspiring, but to the profligate, black or white, it is a curse. Most of the Southern blacks are of the listless, doless, aimless class who are content to live in squalor and ignorance. But it is gratifying to note that there are many exceptions to this rule, many who are striving with a laudable ambition to rise in the scale of civilization. If the bulk of the race would follow the guidance of such noble, aspiring

<sup>1</sup> The writer, in talking with an aged colored laborer on the streets of Philadelphia, asked him how he liked this life compared with old slavery days. The old man, who had been a slave for many years before the war, braced himself up and said, "'Mancipation may be good 'nough fer some, but fer me, gimme back de ole slavery days, fer then I didn't haf ter buy de flour and de coal an' pay de doctor's bill.'" This condition may be excusable in one of his age, but such lack of ambition in the young is fatal to all progress.

leaders as Booker T. Washington, the race question would soon cease to be troublesome.

Now a closing word on the results of reconstruction. While it is true that the governments set up in the southern States by Congress were of short duration, while some of the measures seemed harsh and severe, while it is difficult to sympathize with such extremists as Stevens and Sumner, it is nevertheless true that congressional reconstruction was, on the whole, a good thing. It was absolutely necessary for the future welfare of the South and of the Nation that some safeguards be thrown around the freedmen. This protection they now have in the last two amendments to the Constitution.

Abraham Lincoln was the providential instrument in guiding the Nation through the perilous times of Civil War. But can we not also see the same Hand in his taking off? Lincoln was the greatest American of the century, and the work of no other can be compared with his; but his work was done. Had he lived another decade, part at least of the great work that he had wrought might

have been undone. Lincoln was too great-hearted, his soul was too generous, his confidence in human nature too deep-seated, for him to have been the proper one to adjust the legal relations between the emancipated slave and his former taskmaster. Had Lincoln lived he might have forgiven the slaveholder too readily, he might have restored the seceded States too easily, the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments would probably not have been adopted, and the race question would be a far more difficult one than it now is. It is difficult to believe otherwise than that, in the death of the great President, as well as in his life, we can see the hand of God.

## CHAPTER VIII

### IMPEACHMENT AND TRIAL OF ANDREW JOHNSON

HISTORY furnishes many examples of a people rising against their sovereign and putting him to death or dethroning him ; but it is rare indeed that we find the official head of a nation placed on trial for his official life in time of peace, and in a legal manner by those who have a constitutional right to do so. The most conspicuous example of this in history was the trial of President Johnson by the United States senate in the spring of 1868. He had been impeached by the House of Representatives for high crimes and misdemeanors, and, after a trial by the highest legislative body in America according to the forms of law, was acquitted. The proceedings attracted world-wide attention.

The latter years of the preceding century had witnessed the impeachment and trial of

Warren Hastings by the British House of Commons. The trial of Hastings, conducted with such pomp and ceremony, extending over several years, and enlivened by the matchless eloquence of Edmund Burke, was a most imposing and momentous event, and attracted the attention of the world. But the trial of Andrew Johnson was an event of vaster significance. The eloquence of a Burke was wanting, but the intensity of feeling far exceeded that of the English trial; and the outcome, in case of conviction, would have surpassed the latter in its results, as the position of the chief Executive of a great people is higher than that of an ordinary governor of a colonial dependency.

### *Andrew Johnson*

Andrew Johnson was the third of our accidental presidents, the third also of the presidents who were born in North Carolina and elected from Tennessee. Among our chief magistrates who rose from the lower strata of society, he is the most striking example. Other presidents we have had who rose from the commonest walks of life—there were Jackson

and Polk, Lincoln, Grant, and Garfield. But Jackson had taught a country school and was a law student at an age when Johnson had not learned to read; Lincoln was a careful reader of books while yet a boy; Grant was graduated at West Point, and Garfield took a college degree in his early manhood.

Andrew Johnson was not only penniless and wholly without social standing, he was also illiterate. He belonged to the class of "poor whites" of the South, who were regarded by the ruling classes as scarcely above the slave. A tailor by trade, industrious, of a rugged personality, honest, ambitious, and aspiring, he grasped for the little knowledge within his reach. Barely able to read when married, his wife became his first and only teacher. He studied faithfully under her directions and soon acquired a good working education. Becoming interested in politics, he was sent to the legislature of his adopted State, from which, after several years' service, he was promoted to the Congress of the United States. Entering the House in 1843 at the age of thirty-five, he served ten years and became governor of



Tennessee. After serving four years in this capacity he was elected by the legislature to the United States Senate, where we find him at the outbreak of the Civil War.

Of the twenty-two senators from the seceding States Andrew Johnson alone remained faithful to the Union. Thus he attracted the attention of the country; his object, however, was not to attract attention, but to put down the rebellious slaveholder, to save the Union. His patriotism was without a flaw. His courage rose to the heroic. On one occasion he kept at bay a mob thirsting for his blood by the defiant glare of his eyes. But his courage was of the bulldog character. To the better part of valor, discretion, he was a stranger. He was pugnacious by nature, seemed to enjoy combat, and continued to fight after he was beaten, without knowing he was beaten.

He had always been a Democrat, but he won the good will of all Republicans by his heroic stand for the Union in 1861—especially the good will of Lincoln, who made him military governor of Tennessee the following year. In 1864 he was chosen as Lincoln's

running mate on the National ticket, and elected. His brief inaugural address when sworn in as Vice-President made a bad impression. It was plainly the rambling, incoherent harangue of a drunken man. Many, who did not know him well, trembled when they thought of the possibility of his becoming President. But there was no cause for alarm on that score. Johnson was not a drunkard. He had accidentally taken too much brandy that morning, in a medicinal way, but ordinarily Johnson was a temperate and sober man. Lincoln, hearing of the episode, exclaimed, "Andy made a bad slip the other day, but don't be scared; Andy isn't a drunkard."<sup>1</sup>

In less than six weeks after the inauguration Lincoln had fallen a victim of the assassin and Johnson was President. In ordinary times he might have made a good President. But the times were inauspicious. The war was over, but the blood of the combatants still boiled; the state of the country was the worst it had ever been in time of peace. Moreover, the whole machinery of government had been tem-

<sup>1</sup> McCulloch's "Men and Measures of Half a Century," p. 373.

porarily thrown out of balance by the death of the great civil captain who had piloted the ship through the storms of civil war.

Andrew Johnson was ill fitted to take the helm at such a moment. With all his honesty, his good intentions, his patriotism, it would have been hard to find one less capable of filling the great office than this egotistic, self-willed, tactless man from Tennessee.

The strife between President Johnson and Congress began with the meeting of the latter in December, 1865. It grew in intensity month by month for two and a half years, when the crisis was reached. This hostility between the executive and legislative branches of the Government, beginning with their different policies on reconstruction, as narrated in the preceding chapter, was intensified by the President's veto of the Civil Rights Bill in April, 1866,<sup>2</sup> and of many other important acts of Congress, and also by the many intemperate speeches made by the President denouncing Congress in the most violent language. But the final crisis came in the spring of 1868, and the immediate

<sup>1</sup> Passed over the veto.

cause of it was the treatment by the President of the

*Tenure of Office Act.*

The Constitution provides that a large number of high officials of the Government be appointed by the President, and that such appointments be ratified by the Senate. But by common consent all such officials were subject to removal at the dictum of the President alone. This power of the President was never questioned until 1867, when Congress passed a law requiring the consent of the Senate for removals as well as appointments. The act, known as the Tenure of Office Bill,<sup>1</sup> was born of personal feeling against President Johnson, whose power and influence Congress wished to curb in every possible way.

While the bill was under consideration, the question as to whether it should apply to cabinet officers came up and was seriously debated. The Senate favored exempting cabinet officers, but the House insisted that they be included, and carried its point; not, however, without

<sup>1</sup> This act was modified a few years later at the suggestion of President Grant, and was repealed in 1887.

bringing forth some very significant expressions from leading senators. Mr. John Sherman stated that, if any cabinet officer was so wanting in manhood and honor as to hold his place after the politest intimation from his chief that his services were no longer needed, he (Sherman) would consent to his removal at any time. Similar expressions were heard from Senator Fessenden and others. It was then agreed by the leaders of both Houses that with reference to cabinet officers, the bill should be construed to apply only to those who were appointed by the acting President. This was discussed by Johnson and his cabinet, and they all, including Mr. Stanton, agreed that the law did not apply to them because they had been appointed, not by Johnson, but by Lincoln.

All went well in Johnson's cabinet for about a year after his elevation to the presidency. In the spring of 1866, three members of the cabinet, who sided with Congress on reconstruction, tendered their resignations, which were reluctantly accepted. Secretary of War Stanton also sympathized with Congress, but refused to resign. His presence became obnox-



ious in the executive councils; he was no longer a confidential adviser to the President, as a cabinet minister is supposed to be; he was an enemy and a spy. Mr. Stanton was advised by his friends to stick, and he did so, contrary to all precedent. So matters continued until August, when President Johnson addressed the following brief note to his secretary of war: "Public considerations of a high character constrain me to say that your resignation as secretary of war will be accepted." Stanton's reply was equally to the point: "Public considerations of a high character . . . constrain me not to resign the secretaryship of war before the next meeting of Congress." A week later the President removed Stanton and appointed General Grant secretary *ad interim*. This was not a violation of the Tenure of Office Act, even if it applied to Johnson's cabinet, as that law provided that the President might suspend an undesirable official during the recess of Congress; but it also provided that he must report his action to the Senate on its meeting. If the Senate approved his action, it stood; if it disapproved, the old official resumed his place. In



December Johnson reported to the Senate what he had done, giving his reasons for so doing. The Senate considered the matter, and voted not to concur in this suspension of Stanton. There can be but one explanation for this action of the Senate. It arose from malicious feeling of the senators against Andrew Johnson. The welfare of the public service could have had nothing to do with it, for General Grant, who served *ad interim*, was quite as competent to do the work as Stanton, nor was there any public demand for his removal, as at that moment he was the most popular man in the United States. On receiving the news of the action of the Senate, Grant immediately abandoned the office, and Stanton resumed his old place.

President Johnson was astonished at the course of the Senate. For the first time in the history of the Government the President had forced upon him a confidential adviser who was personally distasteful to him. No one looking back from this date can come to any other conclusion than that the Senate was in the wrong, and was actuated by ignoble

motives.<sup>1</sup> Johnson at this point made another of his many blunders. He made an enemy of General Grant by chiding him for giving up the office too readily when he, the President, desired to test the validity of the Tenure of Office Act through this case by an appeal to the Supreme Court. Grant had been the personal, almost intimate, friend of Johnson in the face of all opposition of Congress and the people; he had accompanied the latter on his "swinging around the circle" tour to the West. It was Grant who in the early days of reconstruction had made a report on the condition of the South highly favorable to the policy of Johnson; Grant, again, whose testimony before the first impeachment committee shattered the hopes of the radicals. It remained now for the President himself to end forever, with a few hot words, a friendship that might have proved exceedingly useful to him. Had he possessed a tithe of the tact of his predecessor, he would have retained the friendship of Grant at any hazard. But such was Andrew Johnson. The two were

<sup>1</sup> Blaine, Vol. II. p. 354.

enemies from this moment and were never afterward reconciled. No man in public life ever played into the hands of his enemies more certainly than did Johnson. The Republicans were already looking forward to making Grant their standard-bearer in the next presidential election ; but there were many who viewed with distrust the friendship between him and their most implacable enemy, and these were now highly gratified at this open rupture between the two.

Johnson's condition was anomalous. The Senate had thrust upon him a secretary with whom he held not even personal relations. But Johnson soon brought matters to a crisis by informing the Senate on February the 21st that he had removed Secretary Stanton from office and had appointed General Lorenzo Thomas to fill the place *ad interim*. The Senate was astonished at the audacity of the President in thus defying its authority. It immediately passed a resolution condemning the President's action and denying his power to remove Mr. Stanton. It could do nothing more than record this opin-

ion, and it did it "promptly, resentfully, almost passionately."<sup>1</sup>

### *The Impeachment<sup>2</sup>*

The Constitution gives all power of impeachment to the House of Representatives.

<sup>1</sup> Blaine, Vol. II. p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> There have been seven impeachment trials by the Senate during our National history. The first case of impeachment by the House of Representatives was that of William Blount, United States senator from Tennessee in 1798. The charge against Blount was that he had entered a conspiracy to transfer New Orleans and the surrounding territory from Spain to Great Britain; but he was acquitted by the Senate on the ground that he was not a "civil officer" of the United States, and he had been expelled from the Senate the preceding year and was no longer a member.

The second impeachment by the House was that of John Pickering, judge of the United States District Court of New Hampshire in 1803. The charges against him were decisions contrary to law, drunkenness, and profanity on the bench. The Senate found him guilty and removed him from office.

Samuel Chase, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court, was impeached in 1804. His offence was bitter partisan utterances from the bench, in short, "offensive partisanship." Chase was an able and honest jurist, but an old line Federalist, he could not restrain himself from partisan utterances against the Jefferson party. The Senate did not sustain the charges by a two-thirds vote, and Chase was acquitted. He remained in office till his death in 1811.

The fourth impeachment was that of Justice James H. Peck

Andrew Johnson had as many enemies in the House as in the Senate, and even more. Over a year before his summary dealing with Stanton the radicals had made a desperate effort to impeach him. But after months of diligent search for evidence against him the scheme fell through; the motion to impeach was lost by a large majority. The enemies of the President were not, however, to be

of the United States District Court for the district of Missouri in 1830. The charge was that he had punished an attorney for contempt of court for publishing a criticism of the judge's decision in a land case. The Senate acquitted him.

Still another impeachment preceded that of Johnson. Judge W. H. Humphries of the Federal district court of Tennessee was impeached by the House in 1862 for engaging in rebellion without resigning his office, and the Senate found him guilty by a unanimous vote.

Since the trial of Andrew Johnson there has been but one impeachment, that of William W. Belknap, secretary of war under President Grant. By a unanimous vote of the House he was impeached in March, 1876, for having received money for the appointment and retention in office of the post-trader at Fort Sill, Indian Territory. But a few hours before the articles of impeachment passed the House, Belknap resigned his office and the President accepted it. His defence then before the Senate was that he was a private citizen and not amenable to trial by that body. On this ground a two-thirds vote could not be secured against him, though no one doubted his guilt.



thwarted, if in their power to succeed. They watched with eagle eye for an opportunity to again bring up the subject of impeachment. And they now seized with indecent haste upon Johnson's quarrel with the Senate. The same day on which the dismissal of Stanton had been communicated to the Senate witnessed a resolution before the House that "*Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors.*" The resolution was referred to a committee of which Thaddeus Stevens was the head, and on the next day the committee reported it back, recommending that it pass, and even suggesting that the vote be taken without debate! Two days, however, were taken to debate the question. This was Saturday. The discussion lasted till late in the night, the Republicans generally favoring impeachment, the Democrats all opposing it. On Monday the discussion was resumed and a great number of short violent speeches made, the final one being delivered by Stevens. The vote, taken in the evening, resulted in 126 for impeachment, 47 against it, and 17 absent



or not voting. Those voting in the affirmative were all Republicans; those absent or refusing to vote were all Republicans except one; the negative vote was solidly Democratic.

The Rubicon was now crossed. For the first and only time in American history, the President of the United States was legally impeached by the House of Representatives for high crimes and misdemeanors, and he must now stand before the bar of the Senate and answer for his alleged crimes. Upon the Senate now devolved the great responsibility of deciding whether the President should or should not continue in his office to the end of his term. The House proceeded to elect several of its leaders as managers of the impeachment before the Senate.<sup>1</sup> These were men who had filled high public stations and their ability no one could question. They were to appear before the Senate with articles of impeachment and become the prosecutors. All were intensely hostile to the President.

<sup>1</sup> The men chosen were George S. Boutwell and Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts, Thomas Williams and Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, James F. Wilson of Iowa, John A. Bingham of Ohio, and John A. Logan of Illinois.

Meantime Andrew Johnson was calm. He did not seem to be disturbed by the great movements going on in Congress. He did not even make speeches! He quietly sent to the Senate the name of Thomas Ewing of Ohio as Mr. Stanton's successor in the war office. This, for once, was a tactful stroke. Rumors had been current that Johnson's aim was to usurp the powers of the Government and to place it in the hands of the military. But the well-known honesty, patriotism, and high character of Thomas Ewing, now chosen as chief of that department, shattered all such rumors and fears to fragments.

### *The Great Trial*

It was on the 5th of March, 1868, when the members of the House of Representatives, led by their chosen managers, filed into the senate-chamber to present formal charges against the President of the United States. The occasion was an august and momentous one. The Senate, presided over by the chief justice of the Supreme Court, Salmon P. Chase, sat in grave silence as Mr. Bingham read the articles of impeachment. The articles were eleven in

number, the most important being the second, charging the President with violating the Constitution by removing Mr. Stanton contrary to the Tenure of Office Act; the third, charging him with appointing Lorenzo Thomas to fill the office when no vacancy existed; and the eleventh, charging the President with stating in a public speech that the Thirty-ninth Congress was not a lawful Congress of the United States because certain southern States were not represented.

After the formal presentation of the articles the Senate as a court adjourned to meet on the 13th. When it again met the President's counsel asked forty days in which to prepare the defence. They were given ten. On March the 23d, therefore, the great trial actually began. The prosecutors for the House, as before stated, were men of eminent ability; but they were more than matched by the counsel in the employ of the President.

Foremost among these stood Benjamin S. Curtis, former justice of the Supreme Court, a man of eminent learning, and as a lawyer without a superior in the United States. Next to

Curtis stood William M. Evarts of New York, and scarcely below him was the eminent lawyer Henry Stanbery, who resigned the attorney-generalship that he might defend his chief in the famous trial.

The legal battle began with the opening speech made by General Butler, who with much skill endeavored to show that the President had violated the law by dismissing Mr. Stanton. Butler was answered by Judge Curtis in a powerful speech that lasted two days. He pierced the armor of the opposition with merciless thrusts. The burden of his argument was that the case of Stanton did not come under the Tenure of Office Act because that act plainly stated that cabinet officers should hold office *during the term of the President by whom they may have been appointed*, and that Stanton was appointed by Lincoln whose term had ended with his death. This seemed to be decisive; but the opposition claimed that Johnson was simply serving out Lincoln's term, and therefore had no right to regard his secretary of war as the appointee of a preceding term. But this was little more than a play upon words;

it was a good example of how great lawyers may honestly differ as to the meaning and intent of a law.

Now came a crisis in the trial. Mr. Evarts rose and offered to show that the Tenure of Office Bill, after it had passed both houses of Congress and was under consideration by the President, had been submitted by him to the cabinet, and they all agreed that it was unconstitutional and that the duty of preparing the President's message vetoing the bill devolved upon Mr. Seward and *Mr. Stanton*. Chief Justice Chase decided this testimony admissible, but by a vote of the Senate it was excluded.

Again Mr. Evarts offered to prove that the members of the cabinet, including Stanton, had at the same time expressed the opinion that the secretaries appointed by President Lincoln did not come within the restrictions of the pending bill. This was also overruled by a vote of the Senate.

Still again the defence offered to prove that the President and his cabinet had agreed, after the bill became a law, that it was desirable that its constitutionality be tested by the Supreme



Court. In other words, one of the President's objects in dismissing Stanton was to test the constitutionality of the Tenure of Office Law. But even this was thrown out by a majority vote of the Senate. This was certainly a high-handed way of dealing with the defendant. When a man is on trial for violating a questionable law and offers to prove that his motive for so doing was to put the law itself on trial, and his testimony is rejected, what unbiassed observer can believe otherwise than that such rejection is based on prejudice and passion? We criticise our jury system because frequently an illiterate man is chosen to sit in judgment on his fellows, instead of the reading man who may know something of the case already. But here was intelligence of the highest order—learning and ability without limit; yet who will say that this eminent jury was an impartial one?

The great trial continued for more than two months. Among the witnesses were men whose fame was world-wide—commanders of the army and members of the cabinet. General Sherman and Gideon Welles each sat for two days beneath the cross-fire of the contending lawyers.



At length, the testimony all in, the battle of the giants was renewed with increased vigor. Williams and Butler and Bingham on the one side, alternating with Evarts and Curtis and Stanbery on the other, furnished the country an intellectual entertainment never before matched in American history. The testimony on both sides was summed up with the most consummate legal skill, some of the speeches requiring several hours in their delivery. The counsel of both sides having finished, it was left to the Senate to decide whether the President of the United States be degraded from his great office or continue to fill it to the end of his term. The responsibility was grave, for the decision, whatever it might be, was sure to become a precedent in the American Government for generations to come.

It was May the 16th when this remarkable trial came to the crisis. The senate-chamber was crowded to the doors, the members of the House being admitted to its floor. The galleries were packed with citizens from all parts of the country. Foreign ministers and diplomats, high officials of the Government,

men of National fame in science, in literature, or in art, sat with strained faces amid the common crowd awaiting the scene about to transpire. Outside the capitol surged a restless multitude unable to gain admittance. Telegraph operators sat at their places ready to flash the news to the uttermost parts of the Republic—to the cities, towns, and railroad stations, where eager throngs had gathered to await the verdict of the Senate. The silence within the senate-chamber was almost painful as the roll-call began, and as each senator arose at the call of his name and solemnly pronounced "guilty" or "not guilty."

It required two-thirds, or thirty-six of the fifty-four senators, to convict. Many had filed their opinions a few days before, and it was known how these would vote; but enough had declined to do this to make the outcome still uncertain. The Democrats, who had no quarrel with the President, voted unanimously for acquittal; but only ten of the senators were Democrats. Two others elected as Republicans, Dixon of Connecticut and Doolittle of Wisconsin, had acted with Johnson all along,

and were sure to vote in his favor now. Seven additional votes were necessary to save the President. About that number were known to be doubtful; a few had expressed themselves as opposed to conviction. The doubtful senators were led by two of the ablest and most honored men in the Senate or in the Nation — Fessenden of Maine and Trumbull of Illinois. The radical press of the country, anticipating the votes of the doubtful by a week or more, had heaped upon them every form of abuse and vituperation. But, in defiance of public clamor and with a moral courage that the world must admire, these men stood undaunted and unmoved; they voted according to their convictions.

When the votes were counted, it was found that thirty-five had voted "guilty" and nineteen "not guilty." By a single vote, therefore, the President had escaped deposition. The impeachment article voted on was the eleventh, chosen as a test, because it embodied in a general way all the rest. After the vote was taken the Senate adjourned as a court for ten days, when it convened again, and voted on two of the remaining articles with

the same result. The other articles were never voted on, and the impeachment trial was over.

The storm of abuse that now arose from the radical element of the Republican party against Fessenden, Trumbull, and their Republican colleagues who had voted with them was something frightful. They were called traitors to their country, bribe-takers, everything that was vile.<sup>1</sup> They were read out of the party. They were, in the language of Thaddeus Stevens, threatened with a "gibbet of everlasting obloquy" and with "a long and dark track of infamy."

Many were the speculations as to why these men had voted to acquit the President. Some attributed their action to their dislike of Senator Wade, who would have become President had Johnson been removed. Others claimed that Chase was silently working against Wade, and had influenced their action. Still others accused the "traitors of deliberately bargaining away their votes to Johnson"<sup>2</sup> for the

<sup>1</sup> See *The Nation*, Vol. VI. p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> *North American and United States Gazette* (Philadelphia), May 13, 1869.

sake of public patronage. But the greatest number professed to believe that these senators were bribed outright with money, and a committee was actually appointed by the House to investigate the charges of corruption. The accused senators remained calm, dignified, silent. Mr. Fessenden, however, made a statement to the public, a timely, manly statement, in which are found the following words: "The people have not taken an oath to do impartial justice according to the Constitution and the laws. I have taken that oath. I cannot render judgment on *their* convictions, nor can they transfer to themselves my punishment if I violate my own. I should consider myself undeserving of confidence . . . and unworthy a place among honorable men, if for any fears of public reprobation, and for the sake of securing popular favor, I should disregard the convictions of my judgment and conscience."

But the Republican outburst of passion was temporary. The leaders of the party, the great editors, soon saw their folly. A sober second thought led them to reconsider. The general tone of the public press now became in sub-

stance this: Why should these great men be accused of sinister motives? Their public careers are well known; no taint of corruption has ever touched them. How could they have sought position and power? These they have enjoyed these many years. Bribery! let the preposterous accusation never again be mentioned. As to driving these noble souls out of the party—why, bless you, the party couldn't get along without them. This change in public sentiment was permanent; and now, at the close of a third of a century after these great events, it would be difficult to find a sensible American who regrets the outcome of the greatest trial in our history.

Secretary Stanton was deeply disappointed at the result of the trial. During its progress he had held the war office with a sentinel at the door, as if defending a besieged city. The trial over, he instantly resigned, and General Schofield was installed in his place. Stanton's health was broken and his heart was broken. He sank into the grave the following year, after being honored by President Grant with an appointment to the Supreme Court. Let



us pity rather than blame Stanton. He made many blunders; but his services during the war were valiant, and on the whole he was a patriot and a hero.

Next to the President and Stanton, Senator Wade was most affected by the trial and its result. None but Aaron Burr and Samuel J. Tilden have come so near the great prize as he, and yet missed it. Wade's political life was soon to close; it had reached the zenith, and took a downward turn at the great trial. Wade had been a powerful leader for years; the public had honored him with its love; but in this trial he voted against Johnson and thus for himself. His friends had boasted that, if his conscience led him to convict, he would refrain from voting at all; but he voted nevertheless. Wade had been highly honored before this; he was honored after, but not so highly. He still soared, but, like the bird with a broken pinion, he never soared so high again.

### *Observations*

We are a great people, governed by law. Our laws are of our own choosing. Those of

a general nature, those pertaining to the whole people, are embodied in a permanent form—the Constitution. This Constitution, the supreme law of the land, is so difficult to amend or to alter in any way, and our adherence to it is so changeless, that it plays a great part in making us a conservative people. Our moderation is known unto all men, and never, perhaps, was it better illustrated than in the trial of Andrew Johnson. Following hard upon the great war which had stirred society to its profoundest depths, it came at a time when the passions of men had not yet cooled. The war was over, but the knotty problem of reconstruction with which the nation wrestled presented new difficulties at every turn, and kept the old war feeling at fever heat. In the midst of this turmoil came the trial of Johnson. He had resisted the policy of the dominant party on the great questions of the day until the feeling against him became little short of hatred. Yet Johnson was acquitted; but the large vote against him rendered his acquittal a weaker victory for conservatism and moderation than it otherwise would have been.

The trial cannot be pronounced an impartial one. We can believe, however, that every senator voted in accordance with his convictions, his conscience; but the verdict of many was unconsciously influenced by partisan bias. In ordinary criminal cases the accused and the members of the jury are required to be without previous personal relations; but here was a jury the majority of which had, for a long season, been engaged in a most bitter contest with the accused. They were men of the highest training and education, but this did not lift them above the common weaknesses of humanity. No amount of education can train out of a man the common follies of our nature, nor can education implant in a man new virtues; it simply develops that which nature has already furnished, and gives a man greater self-control. Johnson's jury was in some measure partial and prejudiced, simply because it could not help being so.

In ordinary times Johnson would not have been impeached at all. His real offence was not written in the indictment; it was not the removal of Stanton or anything else mentioned

in the articles of impeachment. His great offence consisted of his steady opposition to and exasperation of the party that gave him his power. The greatest of Republican organs, the *New York Tribune*, formally announced that the trial was altogether a party proceeding.<sup>1</sup> The *Independent* regarded the trial as a mere exertion of party strength to get rid of an obstacle.<sup>1</sup> Johnson had a legal, if not a moral, right to his course, nor was it possible for his enemies to reach him on account of it by any legal process. He was arraigned, therefore, on a technicality which, at other times, would have attracted little attention—on the alleged violation of a questionable law framed and passed for him alone.

The trial on the whole was the most notable attempt in human history to peacefully depose the official head of a great nation. Had the attempt succeeded, the precedent for the future would have been mischievous, for it would have not only given the American people a back-setting in their wholesome and self-satisfied opinion of their own conservatism, it would

<sup>1</sup> *The Nation*, Vol. VI. p. 384.

also have furnished a dangerous example to future political parties that might desire to depose an offensive official in high station on purely partisan grounds. It is certainly a matter of pardonable self-congratulation to the American people, not only that the impeachment trial failed, but also that during its progress there was no popular uprising, no serious disturbance of the social and business relations of the country.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ALABAMA CLAIMS

IN our century and a quarter of National life our relations with foreign countries have for the most part been wholesome. Our relations have been more intimate, more frequently strained, and on the whole more important with the country to which we are most nearly related and from which we won our independence than with any other country.

The attitude of the English people, or at least of the English Government, toward the United States has been one of constant change during the period of our National existence. For at least three decades following the Revolution the British feeling toward America was one of contempt, owing to our weakness and insignificance among the Great Powers. This was plainly shown by the forcible impressment of seamen from American ships, and by various Orders in Council intended largely to damage



American commerce. Our chief crime in those days was our youthfulness, and England's attitude was that of Sir Robert Walpole toward the youthful Pitt. But the War of 1812 opened the eyes of the world to the fact that America was able to take care of herself, and in our foreign relations our stock rose with a bound, and it has seldom since then fallen below par. When it was seen that the United States were likely to remain united and to grow into a great and powerful nation, the British feeling was changed to one of jealous rivalry, and so it continued for many years. This feeling was still dominant at the outbreak of the Civil War; and this partially explains the favorable attitude of Great Britain toward the South during the first years of the war.

Since the war, however, since the Union has shown its ability to maintain its own integrity, since we have passed the experimental stage, have grown to the full stature of manhood, and have taken our place as one of the greatest nations of the earth, the attitude of Great Britain has become that of a friendly rival. British writers now refer to us in the most

friendly terms with frequent pleasing references to the fact that we are the offspring of the mother country, and the like. This varying attitude of the English only proves them human. America has won her present standing by toiling upward for a century. A young author or business man or statesman must win and earn recognition before he can hope to receive it. It is so with nations, and America could expect recognition as one of the Great Powers only when it had earned and was in a position to command it. There is now no question of our standing among the nations; and while it is difficult for many Americans to forgive the British for their earlier neglect of their struggling kinsmen, it is very gratifying to note the genuine expressions of relationship and friendship at the present time.

We must now advert to the subject before us. During the Civil War and the years immediately following, the most serious question between her Majesty's Government and the United States (excepting possibly the short-lived affair of the *Trent*) was that which took the general name of the Alabama Claims;

that is, claims of the United States Government against Great Britain for damages wrought by a score or more of Confederate vessels built in English shipyards.

### *The "Alabama"*

The most destructive of these vessels that ploughed the main in quest of Federal plunder was the *Alabama*. She was an armed cruiser of nine hundred tons burden, two hundred and thirty feet in length by thirty-two feet in width and twenty feet deep. Her engines represented three hundred horse-power and she carried eight guns. She was built at Liverpool by the Lairds. Mr. Laird, the senior member of the firm, was a member of Parliament. The Confederate agent, Mr. Bullock, had secured the building of the vessel by the Laird firm, and it was generally known that she was intended for the Confederate service. Mr. Dudley, the American consul at Liverpool, protested vigorously against the proceedings. He laid the matter before the American minister at London, Charles Francis Adams, who called upon the British Government to prevent the

cruiser from entering the service of the southern States; but the Government answered that it "would listen to no complaints from the officials of the United States which did not furnish technical evidence for criminal prosecution under the Foreign Enlistment Act." Dudley then busied himself to find the necessary evidence, and succeeded. On July 21, 1862, he transmitted this to the Board of Customs at London, and urged that the vessel, then known as the "290," be instantly seized, that the authority to do this be given by telegraph, as the ship was now ready for sea and might escape at any hour. In the face of all this the London authorities allowed eight days to elapse before they considered the matter at all!<sup>1</sup> The "290" escaped. She sailed leisurely down the Mersey and spent two nights and a day in Moelfra Bay, but no effort was made to seize her. After steaming about the north coast of Ireland with no apparent fear, the vessel proceeded to the Azores, where, after waiting for some days, she was joined by the *Agrippina*,

<sup>1</sup> It is but fair to say that the delay was caused in part by the illness of Sir John D. Harding of the Queen's Counsel.

direct from London and bearing for the "290" six guns, some hundreds of tons of coal, and large stores of ammunition and provisions.

Two days later another British vessel hove in sight and bore Raphael Semmes, the future commander of the newly built ship, and other officers. On August 24, the "290" came out in her true colors, unfurled the Confederate flag, took the name "*Alabama*," and started a few days later on her wonderful tour of the oceans—the most remarkable in the history of naval warfare.

After destroying a number of American merchantmen, the *Alabama* made a grand parabolic sweep westward, crossing the Atlantic Ocean to within two hundred miles of New York, thence turning southward to the West Indies. Here her depredations were continued, and by the first of November she had captured twenty-seven Federal vessels.<sup>1</sup> When anchored at the island of Martinique the *Alabama* narrowly escaped capture by the United States war vessel *San Jacinto*. Early in December the *Alabama* came upon the United States vessel

<sup>1</sup> See Semmes's "Memoirs of Service Afloat."

*Ariel* between Cuba and St. Domingo and the latter was soon made a captive. A month later the gunboat *Hatteras* was fired upon and sunk near Galveston by the Confederate cruiser. In the early spring of 1863 the *Alabama* made another grand détour, touching the coast of Brazil at Bahia, proceeding thence eastward to South Africa and soon after to the Bay of Bengal, where she spent the following winter making a prize of every American vessel that came within her reach. In the following spring she sailed back by way of the Cape of Good Hope, capturing the *Tycoon* and the *Rockingham* on the way. In July we find her in the harbor of Cherbourg, France.

It happened that the Federal steamer *Kearsarge* under Captain Winslow was lying off the harbor. Captain Semmes could easily have evaded his enemy, nor would it have reflected in the least on his courage and his duty had he done so, for the *Alabama* was a privateer and its business was to prey on unarmed merchantmen. But Semmes had been twitted with being called a pirate and he wished to prove his ship a legitimate war vessel; moreover, he was



anxious to furnish an exhibition of Confederate valor and to revive if possible the expiring question of the recognition of his new-born nation by the European Powers.

He challenged Captain Winslow to a duel.

The *Kearsarge* and the *Alabama* were very near equal in size and strength; the former carried seven guns and the latter eight of about the same caliber.<sup>1</sup> Winslow accepted the challenge, and the two American vessels steamed out about seven miles from shore, so as to be in neutral waters, when they turned each upon the other like two crouching tigers, and began their duel to the death.

The *Alabama* opened with two or three broadsides before the *Kearsarge* began firing; but the distance was twelve hundred yards and little harm was done. The two vessels now began circling round and round, lessening the distance until but nine hundred yards lay between them, each pouring her deadly broadsides into the other with marvellous rapidity. The spectacle from the shore, where thousands of people had gathered to witness the battle, enhanced by the

<sup>1</sup> Pollard's "Lost Cause," p. 549.

rolling cannon's boom across the waters, was one of terrific grandeur. For an hour they gazed with strange fascination upon the mortal strife between the estranged brethren of the same household. Many of the shots went wild; others struck home with fatal effect. One shot from the *Kearsarge* penetrated the coal-bunkers of the enemy, exploded, and killed or wounded eighteen men. At the end of an hour's fighting the *Alabama* ceased firing and was seen to head for the harbor; but Captain Winslow steamed across her bow and was about to open a raking fire when the *Alabama* struck her colors and surrendered.

A few minutes later one of her officers in a small boat rowed up to the *Kearsarge*, informed Captain Winslow that the *Alabama* had surrendered and was sinking, and he begged that boats be sent to save the crew. Winslow instantly dispatched the only two of his boats that had not been pierced by bullets; at the same time he called to the captain of the *Deerhound*, an English yacht that had come near, and requested him to help save the men on the sinking *Alabama*. But while many were still on

board, and but twenty minutes after the battle had ceased, the time of reckoning arrived, and the Confederate privateer sank beneath the waves, —

“And the sea yawned round her like a hell  
As down she sucked with her the whirling wave.”

Thus the wild, meteoric career of the famous *Alabama* was ended. For two years, without let or hindrance, she had coursed the waters of two hemispheres on her mission of destruction. She had destroyed sixty-five vessels — ten million dollars' worth of property. But at last her course was ended. She, with many of her valiant crew, found a final home on the bed of the ocean, on whose bosom she had reigned, a queen without a rival, until her too sanguine master made this hapless challenge to fight a duel with the *Kearsarge*.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly a score of Confederate privateers were

<sup>1</sup> By every rule of warfare the survivors of the *Alabama* were prisoners of Captain Winslow; but to his astonishment the “gentleman” who commanded the *Deerhound* steamed away with Captain Semmes and several of his fellow-officers and gave them their liberty.

But three men on the *Kearsarge* were wounded and none killed. See “Rebellion Record,” Vol. IX. p. 221.

built or fitted out in English waters during the four years of warfare. Next to the *Alabama* the *Shenandoah* was the most destructive to American shipping ; she made thirty-eight captures on the high seas, twenty-one of which were whalers. She had been a British merchant ship in the Bombay trade, and was purchased by the Confederate Government. The *Florida* made thirty-six captures and the *Tallahassee* twenty-seven. In October, 1864, the *Florida* was captured by the United States war vessel *Wachusett* in the harbor of Bahia. But owing to the capture having been made in Brazilian waters the captive ship was released and an apology made to Brazil. The *Florida* afterward sank through an accident off Hampton Roads, Virginia.

### *Negotiations*

There was a notable gathering in the city of Paris in the spring of 1856. In this meeting were representatives from all the leading nations of Europe, and their object was to make new and important rules concerning naval operations in time of war. The most important declaration of this congress was that

privateering — preying upon the enemies' commerce in time of war — be abolished. The United States Government was requested to join in this agreement, but it refused. Had it only been foreseen what a terrible retribution would be visited on the United States within the coming decade on account of this refusal, the decision might have been otherwise. But the reason for refusing was plausible, nevertheless. It was remembered that in the War of 1812 our greatest hold upon Great Britain was through privateering, for her vast merchant marine offered a tempting bait to our few armed cruisers. It was also argued that, since our navy was insignificant and that of various other nations was powerful, it would be obviously to our disadvantage, if, when at war with one of them, armed war-ships alone were legitimate prizes. However, in July of the same year, 1856, the United States offered to accept the Paris Declaration if the Powers would add another article exempting all private property, even of an enemy, from capture on the sea ; but to this they would not agree.

At the opening of the Civil War the United

States was the only great nation not committed to the abolition of privateering, and it was at once seen what a serious blunder had been made; for southern cruisers might now prey to their heart's content on United States merchant marine, while no retaliation could be offered, as the South was without any merchant shipping. At the beginning of the war, even before the close of April, 1861, Secretary Seward offered to accept the Paris Declaration without qualification. France and Great Britain consented on the condition "that it have no effect on the internal difficulty now prevailing in the United States." But this was the very object sought, and as this was denied Seward allowed the matter to drop, and to this day nothing further has been done. Thus we see how it came out that our shipping fell under the ravages of the reckless *Alabama* and her reckless sisters during the Civil War.

In less than four months after the escape of the *Alabama* from Liverpool, Mr. Adams placed into the hands of Earl Russell a written protest against the negligence of the British Government in permitting the vessel and others



of a like character to be built or fitted out in English waters. Russell denied all liability on the part of Great Britain in the matter. Adams kept up his protests during the war as new losses to American shipping were reported. In April, 1865, he made to Earl Russell an official statement of the number and tonnage of United States vessels that had been transferred to the British flag owing to the depredations of the southern cruisers. The earl made answer in the following language, "Her Majesty's Government must decline either to make reparation and compensation for the captures made by the *Alabama*, or to refer the question to any foreign state."

Thus matters stood at the close of the war. Lord Stanley soon succeeded Earl Russell in the Foreign Office, and his refusal to recognize the American claims was as positive and decisive as that of Russell had been. Secretary Seward then informed the British Government that no further efforts for arbitration would be made; but some time later he transmitted a list of claims for which the British Government would be held responsible.

In May, 1868, Mr. Adams, after a long and most faithful service, retired from his mission, and Mr. Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, an aged and highly respected citizen who had won National fame in the cabinet of Zachary Taylor and by his long service in the Senate, was appointed to the Court of St. James. The British ministry was now changed, Mr. Gladstone succeeding Mr. Disraeli as premier, and Lord Clarendon becoming minister of foreign affairs. In a very brief time the Johnson-Clarendon Treaty was arranged. This treaty made no mention of the important demands of the United States; it simply provided that a joint commission be appointed to arrange and settle the claims of private individuals of each nation upon the other. The American public was greatly disappointed. The Senate made short work of the treaty. A two-thirds vote was necessary to its adoption, and it received but a single aye when the ballot was taken. The British public now began to feel, what the Americans had long felt, that there was something serious between the two nations. This feeling was greatly intensified by a speech

made in the Senate by Charles Sumner while the treaty was pending. In this speech Mr. Sumner, always a radical, made the most extravagant claims. He placed our loss through the capture and burning of American vessels at about \$15,000,000, the loss to our carrying trade about \$110,000,000; but Sumner did not stop here. He stated further that the prolongation of the war was traceable directly to England, that the war was doubtless doubled in duration on account of National losses sustained through that country's intervention, and he intimated further that the British Government should be called to pay a large portion of the expenses of the war. This meant that a thousand million dollars, at least, of the war expenses should be demanded of that government.

The new Administration had now been installed; General Grant was President and Hamilton Fish secretary of state. It was first believed that the President and his secretary were in sympathy with Sumner's extravagant and preposterous claim, but in fact they were astonished at the extreme position taken by the senator. Grant's disapproval of Sumner's posi-

tion soon reached the latter's ears, and a coolness sprang up between them which increased until they became personal enemies, nor were they ever afterward reconciled. Sumner's claim was based, not wholly on the ravages of the *Alabama* and other cruisers, but more especially on the Queen's hasty and unnecessary recognition of southern belligerent rights in May, 1861. This proclamation had given the rebellion a standing throughout the world, and had led other nations to imitate the example of England. No other nation, however, had gone so far as to permit within its harbors the fitting out of Confederate cruisers.

President Grant agreed with Mr. Sumner and the American people that this action of the English sovereign was hasty and unnecessary, and certainly showed at least a want of friendly feeling toward the United States; but he regarded it within the competence of any independent power, nor did it furnish any ground for a claim of damages.

A year passed and nothing further was done. In December, 1870, the President, in his annual message, stated that his firm and unalterable

conviction was that the United States had just cause of complaint, and he recommended that the United States Government assume and pay all private claims of American citizens against England and thus make the matter a purely international affair. The message made a profound impression in London,<sup>1</sup> and it speedily awakened the British ministry to action. A month after the message was sent to Congress, Sir John Rose, a London banker, reached Washington on a secret mission. He had been sent to ascertain in an informal way if the United States was willing to open negotiations for the settlement of pending controversies. He found a ready and favorable response to his inquiries, and on the 26th of January Sir Edward Thornton, English minister at Washington, proposed, on the authority of his Government, a Joint High Commission to sit at Washington to discuss the pending questions. Twenty-seven days later the British members of this commission landed in America. In such haste did they leave their country that they left their commissions behind them. These were

<sup>1</sup> Blaine, Vol. II. p. 495.



sent later by a special messenger. Such extraordinary haste, after the matter had been pending for five or six years, was based on a twofold ground: first, the very decided stand taken by President Grant in his message to Congress; second, the Franco-Prussian War. In reference to the latter, Lord Granville had said in the House of Lords that there was "cause to look with solicitude on the uneasy relations of the British Government with the United States and the inconvenience thereof in case of possible complications in Europe."

This covered the case exactly. If England had become embroiled in that European war, and the "Alabama Claims" had yet remained unsettled, irreparable damage would no doubt have resulted to British commerce; for this Government could not have been expected to take the trouble to prevent armed vessels hostile to England from being fitted out in American harbors.

### *The Treaty of Washington*

The Joint High Commission was composed of men of the highest character and standing in



the two nations.<sup>1</sup> They began their sittings early in March, met thirty-four times, finished and signed the treaty on May the 8th. It was ratified by the Senate the same month, by the British Government in June, and was proclaimed in force by President Grant on the 4th of July.

The Treaty of Washington provided for the settlement of the fisheries question between the United States and Canada, for the settlement of the northwest boundary of the United States, for the adjustment of English claims against America, and above all for settling of the long-standing irritating question of the Alabama Claims. It is with this last, which, however, stood first in the treaty, that we have to deal. In the first place the British Commissioners, authorized by the Queen, expressed the regret of her Majesty's Government for the escape of the *Alabama* and other vessels from British

<sup>1</sup>The United States was represented by Hamilton Fish, secretary of state, Robert C. Schenk, Samuel Nelson, E. R. Hoar, and G. H. Williams ; Great Britain was represented by Earl de Grey and Ripon, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Edward Thornton, Sir John A. Macdonald, and Professor Montague Bernard.

ports and for the depredations committed by those vessels. This was followed by the adoption of three rules, which, it was agreed, should have a retroactive, or *ex post facto* effect, so as to apply to the case in hand.

The rules in substance were as follows: A neutral nation is bound, first, to use due diligence to prevent the fitting out or arming of any vessels intended to make war upon a nation with which it is at peace; second, it must not permit either belligerent to use its ports or waters as a base of naval operations against the other; third, it must exercise due diligence within its jurisdiction to prevent any violation of the above named duties.

The treaty then provided for a Court of Arbitration to meet at Geneva, Switzerland, and to be composed of five persons, no two of whom should belong to the same country.

### *The Geneva Conference*

Of the five men composing the Court of Arbitration at Geneva, one each was appointed by the President of the United States, the Queen of England, the King of Italy, the Em-

peror of Brazil, and the President of the Swiss Republic. President Grant appointed to represent our country Charles Francis Adams, ex-minister to England, the son of a former President and the grandson of another. Sir Alexander Cockburn, lord chief justice of England, became the British representative. The King of Italy appointed Count Sclopis of Turin, a man of an eminent family, a distinguished lawyer, judge, and man of letters, whose reputation covered all Europe. The President of the Swiss Republic chose Jacques Staempfli, and the Emperor of Brazil the Viscount d'Itajuba, his minister to Paris. These men were all of the highest respectability and eminence in their respective countries. A few of them enjoyed a world-wide fame. It was generally believed that their decision, whatever it might be, would be accepted as final by the two countries interested.

— The first session of the tribunal took place on December 15, 1871, and Count Sclopis was selected as chairman. The claims put forth by Bancroft Davis, the agent for the United States were based on the actual

damage done by the cruisers in question, the enhanced insurance rates caused by the greater peril to United States shipping, the cost of pursuing the Confederate cruisers, and the transfer of American vessels to the British flag. In addition to these, there was a claim for damages on account of the prolongation of the war, caused by the negligence of the British Government. This last was called "indirect claims" for "consequential" damages. This claim was by no means so extravagant as that of Senator Sumner; but nevertheless it was enough to raise a storm of protest in England. The more conservative Americans agreed that this indirect or consequential claim was not warranted by the facts in the case.

While the British public was in a furor of excitement over the claim, and the Americans, half-hearted, seemed to regret having made it, the Geneva tribunal ended the suspense by throwing it out as "not good foundation for an award of compensation or computation of damages,"—and both countries breathed freer. It also decided that no compensation be

allowed for the cost of pursuit of the Confederate cruisers, as this was not distinguishable from the general expenses of the war. Finally, however, the tribunal decided that the British Government had failed to use due diligence in the performance of its neutral obligations, and that it pay the United States fifteen and a half million dollars in gold as damages in settlement of the Alabama Claims. Chief Justice Cockburn, who represented British interests, alone cast a negative vote, and refused to sign the article when completed. The Conference finished its work on September 14, 1872; both countries accepted the verdict as final, and the troublesome question was settled. This *Alabama* affair has been pronounced the most unfortunate blunder in her foreign policy in the history of the British monarchy;<sup>1</sup> but, instead of rushing to arms, the two nations wisely decided to settle the matter in a friendly way. Thus a great victory was scored for arbitration and a most salutary precedent for the future was established. /

<sup>1</sup> *The Nation*, Vol. XIV. p. 84.

## CHAPTER X

### THE LIBERAL REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT OF 1872

PERHAPS no political party in American history was founded on purer and more unselfish motives than the Republican party. The party was at first composed of discordant elements, — old line Whigs, who, since the hopeless wreck of their party, had wandered homeless, unwilling to join themselves to their ancient enemy, the party that had overthrown their own; the Know-Nothings, who, despite their party name had come to know something, namely, that their party, after its drastic defeat in Virginia in 1855 could rise no more; and the anti-Nebraska Democrats, who had broken the instincts of a lifetime, and torn themselves away from the old party for conscience' sake. Discordant elements they were for the most part; but in one respect they were in accord, — non-extension of slavery, — and this became the corner-stone of the great



structure of Republicanism. But no political party in these latter times will rule the country long without losing, in a great measure, its original purity, without falling, to some extent, into the hands of self-seeking demagogues; and especially is this true at a time of a great social upheaval as was the Civil War, when offices are multiplied, when the military grows insolent in its sway over the civil authority—still more especially when the party in power grows so great as to monopolize government, and its opposing rival becomes so weak that its protesting voice can be heard but faintly.

Such was the condition in the early sixties, and the Republican party proved no exception to the rule. The achievements of the Republican party during the first eight years of its power were far greater than those of any other party in our history during an equal period. But the canker-worm had begun its work. The unfortunate quarrel on reconstruction left its wound; this was deepened by the impeachment of President Johnson. But, worst of all, the party now elected

a President who lacked the capacity of a business man, and was without political training—a President who was a soldier, a true soldier, but only a soldier—a President who was honest, too honest to suspect and watch the dishonest man.

As the first presidential term of General Grant drew near its ending, it was found that many leading Republicans had become profoundly dissatisfied with the working of the party. Among these we find Curtin and McClure of Pennsylvania, Leonard Sweet and Lyman Trumbull of Illinois, Chase and Stanley Matthews of Ohio, Seward and Greeley and Dana of New York; to these must be added such men as Justice Field, Cassius M. Clay, Carl Schurz, the mouth-piece of the German-Americans, Charles Sumner, the great Massachusetts senator, and Charles Francis Adams. These were surrounded by a multitude of followers in every stage of political importance, and supported by such great daily papers as the *New York Tribune*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Cincinnati Commercial*. That some of these men had personal

grievances against the Administration cannot be denied, but to attribute the great defection wholly or mainly to such a cause is a perversion of history.

### *The Cincinnati Convention*

The "Liberal Republican" movement had its beginning in Missouri, where the Administration party refused to restore the ex-Confederates of the State to civil rights. A more liberal element of the party, however, led by Carl Schurz and Frank P. Blair, favored removing all disabilities caused by the war, joined themselves to the Democrats, elected B. Gratz Brown governor, and effected their object. The uprising in Missouri was local in its scope, but as an anti-administration movement it found a ready response from disaffected Republicans in all parts of the country. This anti-Grant feeling in the various States was not generally based on the same ground as that in Missouri; it arose from a widespread feeling of distrust, from a belief that the President was incapable of curbing the wily politician in quest of plunder,

and from the fact that the President persisted in appointing to office many of his relatives and friends regardless of their fitness. The Missouri Liberals were pleased at the favorable reception of their movement by a large number of their fellow-Republicans in other States, and when they perceived that Grant was sure to be renominated by the majority of the party, they met in State convention, and called a National convention to meet at Cincinnati on the 1st of May, 1872.

The Cincinnati convention was a great gathering; it represented much of the best brains of the party that had controlled the country during the war period. They represented no great party, but a disaffected element of a party. They were not sent to the convention; they came of their own accord, and their object was to prevent the reëlection of President Grant. At first the leaders were in doubt whether it were better to put an opposition candidate in the field, or simply to exert a moral influence strong enough to prevent the selection of Grant by the coming Republican Convention at Phila-

delphia.<sup>1</sup> Had the regular party been willing to sacrifice Grant, the Liberal element would have no doubt dissolved. But as this could not be, it was determined to nominate an opposing candidate at Cincinnati. The elements here gathered were as discordant as those composing the original Republican party in 1856; but on one point they agreed—opposition to Grant. They put forth a platform of principles in which they professed to be still Republicans, but opposed to corruption of the civil service, to the supremacy of the military over the civil power, to the continued disability of ex-Confederate soldiers. They also expressed their opinion, as a direct thrust at Grant, that “no President ought to be a candidate for reëlection.” On the tariff question the convention could not agree. Many were free traders, others were avowed protectionists; and on this they agreed to disagree by acknowledging their difference and waiving the question.

The great question before the convention was the choosing of a candidate for President. The

<sup>1</sup> *The Nation*, Vol. XV. p. 20.

success of the whole movement depended on this. There was already a tacit understanding between the Liberals and the Democrats that the latter would ratify the nominations of the former. It was necessary, therefore, for the Liberals to nominate a true Liberal, a mild, broad-minded Republican, who could command the respect and support of the old-time Democrats.

Four prominent names were before the convention; those of David Davis and Lyman Trumbull of Illinois, Charles Francis Adams and Horace Greeley of New York. Any one of the first three would have been very acceptable to the Democrats. The convention nominated the fourth. For many weeks before the convention met the name of Adams was the most talked of. Adams had done valiant service during the war at the court of St. James, and the traditions of his name had much to do with his general prestige. But Adams, like his father and grandfather, was cold, distant, and wanting in the winning arts of the politician; and, true to his ancestral precedents, he made a serious blunder at the very moment when dis-



creet silence might have won him the prize. He telegraphed his friends at Cincinnati that, rather than make any pledges for his honesty, they should "take him out of that crowd." There were many in "that crowd" who resented the apparent reflection, and cast their votes in another direction. Trumbull was considered less seriously than the other three. Davis had a powerful following, and many believed he would be the choice of the convention; but the Adams men declared they would not support Davis if nominated. This narrowed the fight down to Adams and Greeley. On the first ballot Adams led with a little over 200 votes, the New York editor coming second with 147. On each succeeding ballot Adams lost and Greeley gained, until the latter was nominated on the sixth.

*Horace Greeley*

The presidential nominee of the Liberal Republicans in 1872 was, with the exception of the President, the most conspicuous character in the United States; and while Grant had recently loomed, first upon the military, then upon the political, horizon with the suddenness of a

meteor, Greeley had shone from the zenith as a star of the first magnitude for a generation. While Grant was yet a boy in knickerbockers on his father's farm in southern Ohio, Greeley was experimenting in the nation's metropolis with the first one-cent daily ever issued; while Grant was an unknown cadet at West Point, Greeley was in the midst of the memorable political battle of 1840, and through his *Log Cabin*, with its half a million readers, was doing more to elect General Harrison than any other man; while Grant was hoeing potatoes and hauling cordwood in Missouri, or working in his father's tannery in Illinois, already a middle-aged man, and perhaps without a dream of future greatness, Greeley was the proprietor of the *New York Tribune* and the acknowledged prince of American editors.

Horace Greeley, the son of an itinerant farmer, was born in the Granite State in the year of the battle of Tippecanoe. When the boy was six years old, the father became a bankrupt, lost his farm and his home, and he migrated with his little family to Vermont, where his success in gaining a livelihood was little

better. When Horace grew to be a lad of fifteen, (and an awkward, ill-dressed, unattractive, towhead lad he was), he walked many miles to a town in which he had heard that a newspaper was printed, for he was resolved to be an editor. He obtained a position and astonished the proprietor of the paper by writing editorials from the beginning, the best and wittiest the paper had ever contained. A few years later we find him in the same business in Erie, Pennsylvania, near which town his roving father had found in the wilderness another home. As young Horace grew to manhood, his vision broadened and he determined to strike out in the great world, and win for himself the best that his talents could procure. He went to the city of New York. After a long and laborious journey, he reached the metropolis, with ambition in his soul and nothing in his pocket. After years of unwearied toil, years filled with failures and successes, Greeley stepped forth into the public gaze as the foremost editor of New York City, and New York City led the nation in journalism. From this time on to the end of his long career, he held his lofty position without a

rival; and even to this day no one in American history has risen in the field of journalism who can be favorably compared with Horace Greeley.

Such was the man whom the Liberal Republicans nominated in 1872. And herein lay his weakness as a candidate; he had been a conspicuous editor for so many years, he was a man of convictions, positive opinions on all public questions, and he had expressed them freely. Thus he had made enemies in the house of his friends as well as elsewhere, and many of his enemies were powerful and irreconcilable.

But the most serious menace to success was in the attitude of the Democrats. They well knew that they could not hope for success at the polls unless they joined the Liberals, but Greeley was the least acceptable of all the Republicans that might have been named. He had been a violent opponent of the Democracy for more than thirty years, and there was not a leading man in the party who had not felt the weight of his blows. His nomination at first produced consternation among the Democrats of the whole country; but as the weeks passed and the leaders realized the absolute hopeless-

ness of winning on a separate ticket, it was decided to swallow the medicine, however bitter, and Greeley was nominated by the Democratic convention at Baltimore in July.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Campaign*

The campaign of 1872 was an anomalous one. Never before in American history had a great political party supported a candidate whose whole career had been one of unrelenting antagonism to that party. Henry Clay had been a member of the Democratic party for many years before he broke away from it, founded the Whig party, and became its candidate for the presidency. James Buchanan was

<sup>1</sup> A story went the rounds which compared the Democratic party to an aged preacher whose habit in announcing hymns was to take the first one that met his eye on opening his hymn-book. A practical joker pasted in the book the rhymed doggerel beginning, —

“Old Grimes is dead, the good old soul,  
We shall never see him more.”

The preacher opened the book at this place, read the “hymn,” and then slowly raised his eyes and said : “Brethren, I have been using this hymn-book for thirty years, and I never saw this in it before ; but here it is, and we’ll sing it if it kills us.” So the Democrats would accept Greeley if it killed them.

a Federalist in early life, but he had long since abandoned his first love and had been for many years a leader in the councils of the Democrats before he was made President by them. Zachary Taylor had never identified himself with any political party when nominated for the presidency by the Whigs in 1848. And even Grant had voted with the Democracy in 1856, but during and after the war became fully identified with the Republicans. But Horace Greeley had been, from the time he entered public life up to the moment of his nomination, the most bitter and implacable foe with which the Democrats had to contend. Could they now support this man for the great office?

While the Democratic party as such supported him, there were many thousands of the rank and file, especially of the older men who had passed through the political contests of antebellum days, who refused to be brought into line by the party lash. They remained away from the polls and thus kept the vote for the New York editor far below the expectations of his friends. Another source of weakness arose from the opposite direction. Many



Republicans who had favored the Liberal movement at first now became alarmed at finding themselves in Democratic company and hastened to get back to their friends before election time. The most effective campaign argument of the regular Republicans who supported General Grant was that the great majority of Greeley supporters were Democrats, and if he were elected it would be a Democratic victory, a turning of the Government over to the Democratic party. It was too soon, they argued, it was dangerous, to intrust the Government with all the hard-won fruits of the war to the unreformed Democracy, to a party that had pronounced the war a failure but eight years before, a party that was unfriendly to the last three amendments to the Constitution and to the freedmen of the South, a party that included all the old slaveholders and ex-rebels. This was made the main issue by the Republican orators and editors, and it resulted in reclaiming thousands of voters who had but a few months before fully intended to cast their lot with the Liberals. They preferred, on a second thought, to bear the ills they had, rather than fly to others they knew not of.

The Greeley orators, on the other hand, rang many changes on Grant's civic incapacity, on his debauching of the civil service, and on the corrupt carpet-bag governments in the South. They were answered that Greeley's record proved that the civil service would be no better in his hands, that Grant was not responsible for the carpet-bag governments, and that Greeley, with all his prestige as an editor and his ability as a writer, was as utterly without experience in executive office as Grant had been before his first election. Greeley was also taken severely to task for his attitude at the beginning of the war, when he counselled that the North permit the southern sisters to "depart in peace," and after its close, when he signed the bail bond of Jefferson Davis. This last was effectually answered by the statement that it was no less culpable for the Supreme Court to admit Davis to bail with the approval of President Grant than to sign his bond — nor for General Grant to extend a practical pardon to Lee and his army on their surrender at Appomattox.

The campaign was not without its torch-

light procession element.<sup>1</sup> It was even compared with the memorable campaign of 1840, in which Greeley, then a young man, was a most conspicuous figure.

<sup>1</sup> Here are a few specimens of the songs, made for the occasion : —

“Hiram had a little lamb,  
T-m-y was his name,  
Shouting the battle-cry of plunder;  
And every time the master robbed,  
The lamb would do the same,  
Shouting the battle-cry of plunder.

CHORUS — Greeley forever ! Hurrah ! boys, hurrah !  
Pack off Ulysses to dwell with his pa.  
We'll rally round the flag, boys,  
We'll rally once again,  
Shouting for Greeley and the Union.”

Another ran thus :

“Old Horace Greeley's come to town  
With his old white hat and B. Gratz Brown.  
Whene'er you see the old white hat,  
You know there's something under that.  
Go away, Ulysses Grant,  
You can't come in, because you can't,  
To rule the country like an honest man;  
But Uncle Horace says he can.”

On the other side we find :

“Who is this Horace Greeley, Pa,  
That people call so wise ?

When the arguments were exhausted and the songs well worn, both sides stooped to personalities and vituperation, known in our political parlance as "mud slinging." Greeley was much stronger in the West and South than in his own locality. Late in the summer he made a tour of some weeks' duration through Ohio, Indiana, and other States, and many thousands of people flocked to the towns and railway sta-

Is he some giant tall enough  
To reach unto the skies ?

"Oh, no, my child, about as large  
As I, or Governor Brown;  
'Twas not his stature made him great,  
Or won him his renown.

"But he it is who nobly bailed  
Jeff Davis from his cell,  
And now we want for President  
The man who did so well."

And another :

"The Ku-Klux-Klan  
Don't like our man,  
To beat him they  
Will plot and plan.  
But Ku-Klux-Klan  
May rave and rant;  
Beat Grant they can't,  
They can't beat Grant."

tions to see the great editor, whose pen had entertained and instructed them and their fathers before them for many years. His speeches made on this tour were noted for their conservatism, their wisdom, and their tact. For the first time since Greeley's nomination the Grant managers began to feel alarmed.

Several States held elections early in the autumn, and these elections were now looked forward to by both sides with the keenest interest. North Carolina was the first of these early voting States, and both sides claimed the State beyond the peradventure of a doubt up to the closing of the polls on election day. The regular Republicans carried the State by a fair majority, and the Greeleyites now turned their attention to Vermont and Maine, which were to hold State elections a few weeks later. But these States followed the example of North Carolina. As the autumn passed Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Nebraska voted, and in all of them the Republicans were successful, except that Indiana selected a Democratic governor, though the legislature went Republican. The Greeley party still maintained a bold front, and professed to

still believe that their candidate would be elected President; but every intelligent man in the country knew that the reelection of General Grant was now inevitable. And so it came to pass, Grant carried every State in the North and all but six in the South. Not since the election of Franklin Pierce over General Scott in 1852 had there been such a sweeping victory.

Mr. Greeley's defeat came upon him like a shock. It was not the simple defeat, for that was scarcely unexpected, even by him, but the overwhelming vastness of it that was crushing. Greeley was a sensitive soul. The praise or blame of his fellow-men had always affected him deeply, nor did his long years of experience in the midst of political turmoil render him more callous than he had been in his young manhood. He had grown to believe, from his great editorial success, that his influence was vast and himself was one of the most highly honored among his countrymen. And now to have his idol shattered in a sudden, relentless stroke was more than his sensitive nature could bear. When the chief ambition of an ambitious man is suddenly shattered to fragments, the heart



wound it produces is usually mortal. Only the strongest nature can bear it.

Greeley could not realize that, of his thousands of friends, many had voted against him because they feared that a change in the Government at that time might not be for the better, but they were still his friends; many others had voted against him because he was in Democratic company. But Greeley could not see this; he saw only the result, and this convinced him that the people did not love him as he had confidently believed. He did not foresee that his countrymen, for generations after he was gone, would honor his memory and revere him as one of the leading Americans of his time. Moreover, he had just suffered the loss of his beloved wife, the companion of his long struggles, at whose dying bedside he had spent the closing weeks of the exciting campaign. Thus one misfortune followed another, and the burden was too heavy to be borne. Ere the close of the month that brought his great defeat, ere the shouts of victory for his successful rival had died out, while the echoes were still resounding and the lights were still burning, Horace Greeley

was dead. After a long and tortuous journey — a journey full of light and shadow, with the deepest shadow at the closing — the weary traveller had come to the end and laid aside his staff.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE DISPUTED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1876

ONLY once in the history of our National Government has there been a disputed presidential election. Twice before, it is true, the Electoral College had failed to choose a President and the election went to the House of Representatives, as provided by the Constitution;<sup>1</sup> but in neither case was there any dispute as to how many votes had been cast for each candidate. In 1876, however, a contest arose as to which of the candidates had received a majority of the electoral votes; no decision was reached for several months after the vote of the people had been cast, and, indeed, the matter was settled only within a day or two of the time of the inauguration. At various times, during that winter of suspense, the peace of the country seemed to hang in the balance; but in

<sup>1</sup> First in 1800 and again in 1824.

the end the general good sense and moderation of the American people prevailed and the great question was settled without serious consequences.

For sixteen years the Republican party had held the reins of Government. Its achievements were great and of permanent value; but it made many false steps, especially in the later years, and its hold upon the people was correspondingly weakened. In the congressional elections of 1874 the Democrats won a sweeping victory and gained full control of the Lower House. It may seem strange that, considering the record of the Democratic party during the war, it again had control of the popular branch of Congress in less than ten years after the coming of peace. The chief cause is found in Republican blunders. Had the Republican party remained approximately as pure in practice during the first ten years of supremacy as it had been in theory at its founding, its very probity would have destroyed its wayward rival. Our political system is such that a party out of power fattens on the shortcomings of the dominant party. To this fact the Democrats owed

much of their strength at the time we are treating. Even the Liberal Republican movement of 1872, though disastrously defeated at the polls, had proved a permanent benefit to the Democrats. The Democratic party went down in the disaster, it is true ; but it had grown used to such defeats, and it rose with its usual resilience and with the party organization unimpaired. The Liberals, on the other hand, did not retain their party organization, and while the majority of them returned to the Republican fold, there were many who remained with the Democrats. Such leaders as Curtin and McClure and Trumbull and Ewing, with thousands of the rank and file were henceforth identified with the Democratic party ; hence that party was permanently strengthened by its Greeley escapade in 1872.

As the presidential contest of the centennial year approached the Democrats looked forward to it with hopefulness, even with confidence, and they were eager to enter the arena. The Republicans, on the other hand, felt insecure in their control of the Government. The more honorable of the party felt keenly the

charges of corruption made by their antagonists, nor did they pretend to deny them. Some of them were open to the world and could not be denied. At the very time of the opening of the campaign a member of President Grant's cabinet had been impeached by the House, and was being tried by the Senate for bribery and corruption.<sup>1</sup> The Republicans, moreover, were at sea with regard to a candidate, while the Democrats fell under the leadership of a commanding genius whose name had become a synonym for reform throughout the country. From these facts it would seem that in entering the great contest the advantage lay with the Democrats.

### *The Two Candidates*

The Republicans met in National Convention at Cincinnati, Ohio, on the 14th of June. For the first time since 1860 there was to be a real contest in the convention for a presidential candidate. Since the first nomination of Lincoln there had been no such contest; in each case it was easily foreseen who the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 195, note 2.



candidate would be; the convention simply met and ratified the choice already made by the people. But in 1876 the wisest political seer was wholly at sea in forecasting the Republican ticket. The leader whose following was greatest was James G. Blaine of Maine; and his chances were further enhanced by his being placed in nomination by Colonel Ingersoll in a most brilliant outburst of eloquence that became historic, and made the speaker scarcely less famous than the one for whom he spoke. But there was a conservative element in the party whose confidence Mr. Blaine had failed to win. These were profoundly opposed to his nomination, and their strength was too great to be overcome.

Other prominent candidates were Senator Morton of Indiana, the brilliant Roscoe Conkling of New York, Mr. Bristow of Kentucky, former member of Grant's cabinet, Ex-Governor Hartranft of Pennsylvania, and Rutherford B. Hayes, governor of Ohio.

Blaine led on the first ballot with 285; Morton came in second with 124. Next following in order were Conkling, Hayes,

and Hartranft, with a few scattering. Little change took place until the fifth ballot, when Michigan, whose vote had been scattered, cast her solid vote for Hayes. On the sixth ballot Hayes made further gains, and others dropped out until the contest was narrowed down to him and Blaine. The seventh ballot was cast, and Mr. Hayes was nominated by a small margin. William A. Wheeler of New York received the nomination for the vice-presidency.

Governor Hayes's selection was a surprise to the country. He may be classed among the "dark horse" candidates. He had not been looked upon as a National statesman or a great party leader. Nevertheless his record was by no means to be despised. An Ohioan by birth, he was graduated at Kenyon College, after which he went to Harvard, and as a law student sat at the feet of the famous Judge Story. Returning to his native State, he began the practice of law in Fremont, but soon removed to Cincinnati, where he rose to be one of the leading members of the bar. In 1861 he offered his services to the cause of the Union

and was made a major by Governor Dennison. Four years he served his country in the field, distinguished himself for bravery at South Mountain, at Winchester, at Cedar Creek, and elsewhere, was wounded four times, and returned to his home at the end of the war with the rank of brigadier general. While still in the field he was elected to the Lower House of Congress, in which he served two terms.

Four years he spent as a youth in college, four years in the war, four years he served in Congress, being first elected in 1864, four years and a little over he was governor of Ohio, and four years President of the United States — and in a public address late in life he stated that the happiest four years of his life were those he spent as a soldier battling for his country.

While Mr. Hayes was not a brilliant man, nor did his name create much enthusiasm in the party, there was a settled conviction on all sides that he was honest, straightforward, and beyond the reach of demagogues and ward politicians. His letter of acceptance was a wise and able document in which he pledged himself to a single presidential term, if elected.

The Democratic Convention met in St. Louis two weeks after the nomination of Hayes. The party had been for years without a great leader, but this was not its condition in 1876. There had recently risen in the political firmament a star of the first magnitude in the person of Samuel J. Tilden of New York. He saw the party, as it were, a flock without a shepherd, and, conscious of his powers of leadership, he took command of his own will and there was none to dispute his sway. Tilden's nomination was a foregone conclusion. A furious effort was made by John Kelly, the Tammany leader of New York, to break the Tilden phalanx, but his efforts were fruitless. When the convention was ready for nominations a few States presented "favorite sons," but the Tilden wave swept all before it. Receiving over four hundred votes on the first ballot, but lacking a few of the requisite two-thirds, Mr. Tilden was unanimously nominated on the second.

Samuel J. Tilden was a great lawyer. He had amassed a vast fortune. For many years he had practised his profession, serving an occasional brief term in the New York legisla-

ture, assisting in the framing of the State constitution, rendering effective aid to his party from time to time as a member of the State committee, but he was not recognized as a great National leader until he had almost completed his threescore years. Mr. Tilden first attracted the notice of the country in his famous fight with Tammany Hall in New York City. He was the conspicuous leader of the reform party that unearthed the gigantic frauds in the government of the city and resulted in the overthrow of the notorious "Tweed Ring." In 1874 he was elected governor of New York, and in this position he found ample opportunity to continue his work of reform. The "Canal Ring," which had looted the State of millions, was scarcely less infamous than the ring that had held the city by the throat for years. The new governor, who had so successfully grappled with the one, now addressed his personal attention to the other. He did not originate the new reform movement, it is true; that had been done already. But he gave his great talents to completing the overthrow of the public thieves, and he reaped a rich harvest of public approbation



— more perhaps than he deserved, for the people are prone to applaud the one who is successful, while they too frequently forget the pioneers who go before and make success possible.

Tilden was beyond a doubt sincere in his work for reform; he was not a time-server nor a self-seeker. At the same time he was looking forward to the presidential nomination, as any honest man has a right to do. And his path was easy; not only did he hold in his grasp the Empire State, but he was now recognized throughout the country as the leader of the Democrats of the Nation, and none could dispute the fact that he was the ablest of them all. He was further especially fitted to become the party nominee from the fact that the great work of his life had been in the line of reform, and reform must necessarily be the Democratic shibboleth in the coming presidential contest. The nomination of Tilden at St. Louis therefore came as naturally as the falling of ripened fruit.

### *Issues of the Campaign*

The Republicans were on the defensive in the campaign of 1876. The Democratic cry



was "Reform, Reform!" This was reiterated and reëchoed from all sides. The great city dailies and the village newspapers, the political orator of National fame, the local exhorter in the country schoolhouse,—all joined in the one widespread cry of reform. And there was much ground for such a battle-cry. "During the whole of General Grant's second term of office a profound demoralization pervaded the Administration."<sup>1</sup> The Congress also was subject to the gravest charges of corruption. The infamous "Credit Mobilier" scandal was brought to light in 1873, and the names of various members of the House were tainted henceforth with dishonor. The same year witnessed an act known as the "Salary Grab," by which the members of Congress increased their own compensation by fifty per cent and made the act retroactive so as to apply to the Congress that had passed it. These and other scandals of lesser note made a deep impression on the country, resulted in a widespread reaction against the Republicans, and brought the Democratic "tidal wave" of 1874, which swept away the Republican major-

<sup>1</sup> Woodrow Wilson's "Division and Reunion," p. 278.

ity, of near a hundred in the House of Representatives, replacing it with a Democratic majority almost as great. This great anti-Republican wave had somewhat subsided in 1876, but it was still strong enough to give the Democrats the greatest hopes of success. Another element of Democratic strength was found in the financial panic of 1873. This unusual disturbance of the country's business was laid at the door of the Republican party, as all such disturbances are blamed on the party in power, guilty or not guilty. The Democrats, however, were not careful to give credit to the Administration for the good it had done. They told the truth, but not the whole truth. The Administration had made possible and provided for the return to specie payments; the "Salary Grab" Act was repealed by the same Congress that had passed it; the Alabama Claims had been settled with honor to the United States; the naturalization laws had been extended to the alien African. For these facts the Democratic campaign orator had no use, and he left them unsaid.

The Republicans were not able to raise a

counter-cry of corruption in public life against the Democratic party, for the latter had been out of power for many years. They opened the campaign with the old war-cry known as "waving the bloody shirt." The Democrats, North and South, they claimed, were still public enemies, and must be met at the polls in the same spirit as they had been met on the battle-field.<sup>1</sup> If the party succeeded to power the southern war debt would be paid, perhaps the black man reënslaved, and the like. The trouble with this campaign cry was that it was well worn. It had been used effectively in former years, but now only the least intelligent were frightened by it. The greenback heresy swept over the land about this time, and many Democrats had been tainted by it. In their platform they demanded the repeal of the Resumption Act of 1875; but the Republicans could make little capital of this from the fact that Tilden, in his letter of acceptance, had pronounced himself in favor of resumption, only criticising the Republican method of bringing it about.

<sup>1</sup> *The Nation*, Vol. XXIII. p. 277.

These issues of the campaign becoming well worn and being deemed inadequate, the orators and editors next turned their attention to Mr. Tilden and attacked his character. They accused him of personal dishonesty in various railroad deals, and asserted, also, that he had defrauded the government in the early years of the war by non-payment of his income tax. The candidate was thus forced to deny the charges in an open letter, which satisfied his followers but failed to quiet his accusers. The influence of the Administration was used in every available manner to secure the election of Hayes.<sup>1</sup> A member of President Grant's cabinet was chairman of the Republican National committee, and he devoted his time and energies to the campaign, regardless of his official duties. As election day approached every one foresaw that the contest would be a close one, but no one was prepared for a long and exciting struggle to be continued throughout the winter.

<sup>1</sup> *The Nation*, Vol. XXIII. *passim*.

*The Returning Boards*

The earliest reports on the night of election day seemed to indicate the election of Tilden. The Democratic electors had been chosen in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Indiana exactly as Mr. Tilden had predicted. These, with a solid South, which was also counted on, would have given Tilden the election with a score or more votes to spare. So sure were the Democrats that they raised a shout of victory and lit their bonfires; but their ardor was soon cooled, for the Republicans, ere the dawn of the day following the election, put forth the positive claim that the electors for their candidates had been chosen in three of the southern States, and that they were elected. This was denied by the Democrats, and thus the great post-election contest was begun. The whole country was deeply stirred by the uncertainty of the situation. Both sides claimed to have carried the election. Weeks passed and wrought no change. Some actually feared that a war would result,—an interne-cine war, the opposing forces divided on party

lines — which, had it occurred, would have been the most appalling in all history.

But the majority displayed the greatest confidence in the great good sense of the American people, and refused to believe that the contest would result in bloodshed. This confidence was strengthened by a despatch from President Grant to General Sherman, commander of the army, by which the latter was enjoined to strengthen the military forces in the disputed States, so as to preserve good order and prevent any interference with the legal counting of the votes. Grant further added, "No man worthy of the office of President should be willing to hold it, if counted in or placed there by a fraud. Either party can afford to be disappointed in the result." This had a salutary effect in quieting the public mind.

The States in dispute were Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida. The chances still seemed to favor Tilden, who was sure of 184 electoral votes without counting any of those in dispute, and but one more was required to elect him. If, therefore, he secured one vote from any of the three States, he would have the requisite



number and be elected. Mr. Hayes, on the other hand, must secure all the electors of these three States in order to become President. But Hayes's advantage lay in the fact that the official count in each disputed State was in the hands of members of his party;<sup>1</sup> he was therefore sure to receive justice if not more. The count in each of the three contested States was in the hands of the Returning Board. It was generally believed that the votes of South Carolina and Florida would be cast for Hayes, and so they were according to their respective Returning Boards. The contest in Louisiana attracted the most intense interest. The Returning Board in this State had been created in the worst days of the carpet-bag government, and contrary to all precedent and to all constitutional law, it had judicial as well as ministerial power. It could reject the votes of any parish or part of a parish on any ground that it chose to pronounce sufficient, and there was no appeal from its decision. The Board was properly

<sup>1</sup> There was one Democrat on the Returning Board of Florida. Those of South Carolina and Louisiana were wholly Republican.

composed of five members; but in point of fact there were at this moment but three, and two of them were negroes.<sup>1</sup>

The situation was not only grave and peculiar; it was ludicrous. A great nation of fifty million people awaited with breathless interest for two black men, the majority of the Board, and recently emerged from slavery, to name its Chief Magistrate for the ensuing four years. The men were insignificant and unknown. One was a custom-house official and held his place at the will of the President; another had been a candidate for a petty office in the very election on which he now sat in judgment. Two years before, this same Board, composed of the same men, had decided a State election, and a committee of Congress, including such leading Republicans as William A. Wheeler, Senators Hoar and Frye, went to Louisiana to investigate, and promptly condemned the proceeding as illegal and fraudulent.<sup>2</sup> What could now be expected from such a source? Prominent members of both parties hastened from the North to New

<sup>1</sup> *The Nation*, Vol. XXIII. p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 309.

Orleans to witness the proceedings and see fair play for their respective parties. Of these the Democrats proposed joint meetings with the Republicans, that both might witness the means by which the decision would be reached; but the Republicans refused all official relations with them. The matter was therefore wholly in Republican hands, and after some weeks of waiting the vote of the State was given to Hayes and Wheeler. Governor Kellogg, who held his position only by the support of Federal troops, promptly signed the certificates of the Republican electors.

With this decision the cry of fraud instantly arose from the Democratic press of the whole country. The leaders of the party protested vigorously against the decision of the Returning Boards of the three contested States. Mr. McEnery, who claimed to be elected governor by the opposite party, gave certificates to the Democratic electors. Many irresponsible and reckless Democrats declared that Mr. Tilden should call his followers to arms, for the purpose of seating him by force if necessary; but this was not the sense of the party as a whole. Never-

theless, the danger was tremendous. The difficulty assumed the most serious aspect indeed, and the question of the hour was, How can the great contest be settled without violence? The Democrats proposed that the joint rule of Congress of February, 1865, be now followed. This rule was "that no electoral vote objected to shall be counted except by the concurrent votes of the two Houses." This was not an act of Congress, but simply a joint rule intended for that election only; it had been followed, however, by general consent in counting the electoral votes of 1868 and of 1872.<sup>1</sup> If the rule were now followed, the Democrats could easily prevent the seating of Hayes, for the Lower House was Democratic by a strong majority. But the Republicans objected, and claimed that the president of the Senate on opening the ballots should decide on their validity. The Democrats objected to this, and both pretensions were abandoned.

<sup>1</sup> Blaine, Vol. II. p. 583.

*The Electoral Commission*

As the winter months passed, the anxiety of the country grew more and more intense. The attention of the world was drawn to the threatening condition of America. The country had just passed through a civil war, the like of which had never before been known in the history of man. Would these same people now engage in a far more deadly strife in order to settle a presidential dispute? Who could believe that the American people were so wanting in common sense? While the excitement was at its height, Senator Edmunds came forward with a bill that at last promised a solution to the problem. This bill provided for an "Electoral Commission" to be composed of fifteen persons, five each from the Senate, the House, and the Supreme Court, and these should finally decide on the validity of the electoral votes. It was passed by both Houses, and accepted by both parties. It was tacitly understood that the Senate would appoint three Republicans and two Democrats, while the House would appoint three Democrats and two

Republicans. This was accordingly done. Four justices were then appointed, two of each party, and these were given power to select a fifth.<sup>1</sup> It was currently believed that Judge David Davis of Illinois would be the fifth member of the Commission from the Supreme Court, as he was looked upon as a neutral in politics; but, while the matter was pending, Davis was elected by the Democratic legislature of Illinois, to the United States Senate. His acceptance was a practical acknowledgment that he was not a neutral, but a Democrat, and Justice Bradley was selected on the Commission in his stead. This was a sore disappointment to the Democratic party, as Davis was known to have favored Tilden in the late campaign, while Bradley was reckoned as a Republican.

The Electoral Commission thus created was composed of eight Republicans and seven Democrats. It was hoped that this Commission

<sup>1</sup> The Electoral Commission was composed of the following persons: — Justices of the Supreme Court: Clifford, Miller, Field, Strong, and Bradley. Senators: Edmunds, Morton, Frelinghuyssen, Bayard, and Thurman. Representatives: Payne, Hunton, Abbott, Garfield, and Hoar.



would now rise above party lines and render a judicial verdict purely on the merits of the case; but such hopes were not to be realized. From each of the three disputed States double returns had been sent, and must be passed upon by the Commission, and in every case it voted on strictly party lines, deciding for Hayes and Wheeler by a vote of eight to seven.

There was a complication also in Oregon. The Republican electors had been chosen at the late election; but one of them, it was claimed, was disqualified to be an elector, and the Democratic governor gave a certificate to the elector of his own party who had received the highest number of votes. But the Commission promptly decided against him by the usual vote of eight to seven. General Hayes was therefore declared President-elect of the United States. The Commission sat for several weeks, during which the suspense and anxiety of the country was painful in the extreme. The ultimate decision was reached only two days before the time for the inauguration. The Democrats could not gracefully object to the decision of the Electoral Commission, as they had aided in

its creation and had agreed to make it the final arbiter. But nevertheless they again raised the cry of fraud, not against the Commission, but against the Republican party for its high-handed methods in counting the electors of the southern States for Hayes by the aid of Federal troops. Mr. Tilden had received a popular majority in the election of a quarter of a million, and, as his followers claimed, a clear majority of the electors, if honestly counted. That the Republicans had stolen the presidency was fully believed by a vast majority of the Democrats, and the same theory has many supporters to this day.

It is not for the writer of this chapter to pronounce any opinion on the merits of this question. Indeed, it is only after the chief actors in such a contest have all passed away that the critical historian can probe it to the bottom without awakening in his readers a sense of partisan bias in himself.

President Hayes felt keenly the accusation of his opponents that he was a fraudulent President, nor did he cease to feel it as long as he lived. But whatever his personal opinion in the matter, it is difficult to see how he could have

done otherwise than obey the mandate of his party when it called upon him to be installed into the great office. A refusal on his part, had he been inclined to refuse, would no doubt have led to more serious complications. Hayes made an excellent President — not great, not brilliant, but honest and patriotic in the highest sense ; and not even his enemies could find any fault with him, except that he had accepted an office to which his election was doubtful.

The great relief at the end of the contest was felt on every hand. Boast as we may of our conservatism, it is certain that this disputed presidential election brought us to the verge of a precipice the height and depth of which not even the wisest could foresee.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE GARFIELD TRAGEDY

TWICE in the history of our National Government has our chief magistrate suffered death at the hands of an assassin.<sup>1</sup> The first of these two sad events took place at the close of the great war, when the blood of both sides was still at boiling point. But notwithstanding the fact that the people were long familiar with violence, with bloodshed and death, the shock to the country at the taking-off of the beloved President was greater than could be measured. The assassin, a man of intelligence and talent, was

<sup>1</sup> An attempt was made to assassinate President Jackson in 1835. He was attending the funeral of a member of Congress, when in the midst of the crowd a man snapped two pistols at his breast, both of which missed fire. The President rushed upon the would-be assassin with his cane. The man was taken into custody, was found to be a demented Englishman named Lawrence, and was placed in an asylum. The President's escape was very narrow, as both pistols were afterward fired at the first trial.

insanely devoted to the cause of the South, and seemed to believe that by this act he would avenge the wrongs of the people who had failed to achieve victory on the battle-field.

The second occurred in time of peace, and had its origin in a political feud within the party to which the President belonged, and in the chimerical brain of a half-witted fanatic, who was senseless enough to believe that he would be made a hero for his deed by the faction that had opposed the President. It is to this event and the conditions that produced it that we devote this chapter.

### *The Blaine-Conkling Feud*

The Garfield tragedy had its origin about fourteen years before it occurred, in a quarrel between two Republican leaders while both were members of the House of Representatives. In 1863 a young editor from Maine, a native of Pennsylvania, made his first appearance on the floor of the Lower House, and began a career of party leadership unparalleled since the rise of the matchless Henry Clay half a century before. His name was

James G. Blaine. In the course of our history not more than three men—Jefferson, Jackson, and Clay—can be ranked with Blaine as party leaders. Mr. Blaine had descended from a prominent family with whom the Father of his Country was on friendly terms. There was nothing in Mr. Blaine's boyhood to mark him as a youth of extraordinary promise. He received a good education, spent his early manhood as a teacher, and became editor of the *Kennebec Journal* in Augusta, Maine, at the age of twenty-four. He was not long in his new position until he was recognized by the community as a keen and able political writer. Within three years we find him in the legislature of his adopted State. In 1862 he was elected to the Lower House of Congress. This was in the midst of the troublous war times, and Congress was not without powerful leaders, but Mr. Blaine was not long in stepping to the front, and proving himself one of the most powerful.

Another young Republican leader of remarkable talent was Roscoe Conkling of New York. Mr. Conkling had sat in the House for some



years before the advent of Blaine, and when the latter began to attract attention, the former looked with a jealous eye upon his growing rival, and it seemed inevitable that a clash between the two must soon come, and the leadership of the House be thus determined.

Blaine and Conkling were wholly unlike in mental endowments. Blaine addressed himself to the hearts of his followers, Conkling to their heads. Blaine won affection and allegiance; Conkling won admiration and praise. Blaine delighted in winning a new friend, whom he grappled to his soul with hooks of steel; Conkling's delight was to slash and wound an enemy with his wit and sarcasm, or to dazzle his hearers with rounded periods of eloquence. As a party leader, a winner of popular applause, Blaine far surpassed Conkling. As an orator of brilliant diction and rhetorical power, Conkling far excelled Blaine.

These two rival leaders must necessarily come into conflict. The occasion arose in April, 1866, when a bill to reorganize and establish the army was before the House. One section of the bill provided for the office

of provost marshal-general, who should have charge of the recruiting service and of the apprehension of deserters, and that General James B. Fry be appointed to the position. Conkling bitterly opposed this section on the ground "that it creates an unnecessary office for an undeserving public servant." Bad blood existed between Conkling and Fry, and this perhaps had much to do with the attack of the former on the latter. When Conkling began to speak, Blaine, who was a member of the committee that had the bill in charge, was in the diplomatic gallery, talking with a friend; but his quick ear caught the tenor of the New Yorker's speech, and he hastened to his seat and took the floor the moment the speaker had finished.<sup>1</sup> Blaine pronounced General Fry an able and efficient officer, whose character was without spot or blemish. He referred to a quarrel between Conkling and Fry, in which the former had come out "second best." He further stated that he did not consider it the highest specimen of chivalry or a creditable proceeding to attack Fry's char-

<sup>1</sup> Gail Hamilton's "Biography of Blaine," p. 161.

acter when he had no opportunity to be heard. "My sense of indignation," he continued, "carries me beyond my personal strength, and impels me to denounce such a course of proceeding."

Conkling was highly irritated at this speech. He rose to speak again. The House was profoundly attentive. Conkling brushed aside the question under discussion, and addressed himself directly to the Maine statesman.

"I am entirely responsible," he averred, "not only here but elsewhere, for what I have said . . . To the particular individual to whom it may give offence I will answer not here but elsewhere."

"I say, further, that the statement made by the gentleman from Maine with regard to myself personally, and my quarrels with General Fry and their result, is false."

*Blaine.* "What does the gentleman mean to say was false?"

*Conkling.* "I mean to say that the statement made by the gentleman from Maine was false."

*Blaine.* "What statement?"

*Conkling.* "Does not the gentleman understand what I mean?"

Conkling then proceeded to explain that he referred to Blaine's assertion that he, Conkling, had quarrelled with Fry and was worsted—that he branded as a falsehood. Conkling stated also that he would not be found wanting in courage, if called on to answer for his language.

A few minutes later Blaine again had the floor. The excitement throughout the House and galleries was now at fever heat. Blaine's speech was filled with unconcealed contempt.

"Sir," he began, "I do not know how to characterize this utterance. When we had gentlemen here from the eleven seceded States, they used to talk about answering 'here and elsewhere'; and it was understood that they meant a duel. . . . When a man says he is ready to answer 'here and elsewhere,' he means that he is ready to receive a note outside of the District of Columbia. Well, now, that is very cheap, and certainly beneath my notice. I do not believe the gentleman from New York wants to fight a duel; and I am sure

he needs no assurance from me that I do not intend it. . . . When I have to resort to . . . this cheap swagger about being responsible 'here or elsewhere,' I shall have very little faith in the cause which I stand up to sustain."

Thus ended the day; but the battle was not over. After the session had closed, Conkling went to the office of the *Congressional Globe* and made some alterations in his reported speeches of the day. Among other things he substituted for the phrase "here and elsewhere" the milder form "at all times and places." Blaine discovered this, and the next day took his opponent severely to task for making the change and thus rendering his own repetition of "here and elsewhere" meaningless, and stated that when two gentlemen engaged in a controversy, as a point of honor it should be reported and printed exactly as it took place. Mr. Blaine closed with these words: "Mr. Speaker, I never expected to make a personal explanation in this House in my life. As to courage, I am like the Methodist deacon about his religion, I have none to speak of."

Mr. Conkling answered in a sharp, impassioned speech, and avowed himself "as incapable as the gentleman from Maine pretends to be" of violating a point of honor, characterized his antagonist's remarks as "frivolously impertinent and incorrect," and his imputation of duelism as "a cheap way of clawing off."

Thus closed the second day; but the climax was yet to come. Blaine had secured a writing from General Fry to prove that Conkling had quarrelled with Fry, the accusation of which Conkling had pronounced false. Fry, also, in this document, accused Conkling of receiving a fee of \$3000 as judge advocate while a member of Congress, in violation of the Constitution. This opened a new subject, and the debate went on between the Maine and New York statesmen increasing in bitterness. Blaine declared that he did not believe Conkling had rightfully received the money in question. Conkling avowed that it was paid him, not as judge advocate, but as counsel in the practice of his profession.

Blaine leaped from his seat and asked to make a statement. Conkling refused to yield



him the floor. His anger was now beyond his control, and when the Speaker asked, "Does the gentleman from New York yield to the gentleman from Maine?" Conkling shouted, "No, sir, I do not wish to have anything to do with the member from Maine. . . . Mr. Speaker, if the member from Maine had the least idea how profoundly indifferent I am to his opinion upon the subject which he has been discussing, or upon any other subject personal to me, I think he would not take the trouble to rise here and express his opinion."

Blaine's anger was now equally uncontrollable. He once more took the floor when his enemy had concluded. He completely lost his temper, and poured forth one of the most extravagant tirades of invective and vituperation ever heard on the floor of Congress. After giving his views on the subject under debate, he turned to Conkling with a look of withering scorn, and spoke as follows: "As to the gentleman's cruel sarcasm, I hope he will not be too severe. The contempt of that large-minded gentleman is so wilting, his haughty disdain, his grandiloquent swell, his majestic superemi-

ment, over-powering, turkey-gobbler strut, has been so crushing to myself and to all the members of the House, that I know it was an act of the greatest temerity for me to venture upon a controversy with him."

Referring now to a newspaper article in which Conkling had been compared to the late brilliant Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, Blaine closed with these words: "The gentleman took it (the newspaper article) seriously, and it has given his strut additional pomposity. The resemblance is great, it is striking: Hypætion to a Satyr, Thersites to Hercules, mud to marble, dunghill to diamond, a singed cat to a Bengal tiger, a whining puppy to a roaring lion. Shade of the mighty Davis, forgive the almost profanation of that jocose satire!"

The House apologized to itself for permitting such a speech to be uttered. The Speaker laid the blame on the House, and said that if any member had called the gentleman to order the rules would have been enforced. Mr. Conkling was mortally offended, and from this day forth to the end of his life he never spoke to Mr. Blaine. Not long after this Conkling was

transferred to the Senate, where he served for many years. Blaine became Speaker of the House. In later years friends of the two attempted to bring about a reconciliation between them. Blaine expressed his willingness, but Conkling met every overture with a scornful refusal.

A quarrel between two statesmen may often be passed over as of a personal and temporary nature and without serious effect on the country at large. Sometimes, however, a personal feud between two leaders of the same party may have a far-reaching effect on the political life of the Nation. Who can measure the result on the country of the quarrel between Jackson and Calhoun in 1830? Calhoun's life ambition was to become President of the United States, and it was believed on all sides that he would be the one on whose shoulders the mantle of Old Hickory would fall. But the hold of Jackson on the Democratic party was such that no one could hope to be chosen to the high office at that time without his favor. The hopes of Calhoun were forever blasted by this open rupture, and he turned aside and became the

champion of slavery. The effect of this feud between these two men can be estimated only when one remembers that it was Calhoun above all men that brought about the conditions which produced the Civil War.

Again, in 1848, the entire machinery of the Government was thrown into the hands of a different political party on account of the envious jealousy of one man—Martin Van Buren. There is little doubt that General Lewis Cass would have been elected President in 1848 but for the enmity of Van Buren, who allowed his name to head the Free Soil ticket, and thus threw the vote of New York and of the nation to General Taylor.

This Blaine-Conkling episode had its result. Some of Blaine's biographers profess to believe that the New York senator never seriously injured his great rival's political fortunes; but the facts are otherwise. There is no doubt that Blaine would have received the Republican nomination for the presidency in 1880 but for the powerful and determined opposition of Conkling. Four years later when Blaine became the candidate, it was in Conk-

ling's power to secure his election; but he refused to do it. The mighty Achilles sulked in his tent and took no part in the canvass. His immediate friends understood it, and at least a thousand of them refused to vote for the enemy of their idol, many voting for Cleveland. The falling off of the Republican vote in Conkling's home county alone was sufficient to throw the State to the Democrats, and New York, in 1884 as in 1848, was the pivotal state and decided the presidential election. Had Conkling made a single speech, had he raised a finger in favor of Blaine, in spite of the St. John vote, in spite of the opposition of Henry Ward Beecher and George William Curtis, in spite of the unfortunate Burchard alliteration, the Empire State would have cast its vote for the "magnetic man" from Maine, and he would have been elected. But Conkling remembered the insult of eighteen years before, the "turkey-gobbler strut," the "mud to marble, the dunghill to diamond, the singed cat to a Bengal tiger," and his high-poised soul could not forgive. He took his revenge, and Blaine never became President.

*The Third Term Movement*

For ten years James G. Blaine was the undisputed leader of the Republicans in the House. He was elected Speaker in 1869, and continued to fill the office for six years when the Democrats gained control of that body. After fourteen years' service in the House he entered the Senate. Still he kept his hand upon the helm and was looked upon by the rank and file of his party as the leading Republican of his time. At the National Republican Convention of 1876, his vote on the first ballot far exceeded that of any one else; yet he was not a "favorite son" candidate; his vote was spontaneous and came from twenty-eight States and seven Territories. Failing to receive the nomination, and President Hayes being pledged to a single term, Blaine was generally looked upon as the coming man for 1880. But a change came o'er the spirit of his dream.

General Grant, on ceasing to be President, had made a tour of the world. He had been highly honored by foreign peoples and poten-



tates, not only as an American and an ex-President, but chiefly as a soldier, for the lingering chivalry in the minds of men still places the warrior above the statesman, the poet, or the orator. Grant's reception by the world became a matter of National pride to the whole American people; and when, at the end of three years, the illustrious traveller returned to his native land — when the vessel had safely breasted the billows of the broad Pacific and was moored into the haven at the Golden Gate, a wild shout of welcome arose from the people. His tour from San Francisco across the continent to Philadelphia, whence he had started three years before, was one unbroken ovation. Men forgot the scandals of his administration; their minds went back to remoter days; they saw now in his silent dignity the conqueror of the great rebellion, the hero of Fort Donelson, of Vicksburg, of Appomattox.

This unusual honor rendered General Grant by the masses was in the main sincere and spontaneous, and was given on the supposition that the general had retired from public life

and now desired to spend the remainder of his days in rest and quiet. But the wily politician was on the alert. Why let all this enthusiasm go to waste? There was a faction in the Republican party, and a large faction, that wanted a man. They looked with dismay on the growing clamor for Blaine, and they must find one to put up against him. They also reasoned, and they reasoned well, that the only man in the party who could at all compare with the Maine statesman in the popular heart was General Grant. This faction now determined to use every available means to undermine the prestige of Blaine and secure the nomination of Grant at the coming Republican convention. The leader of this movement, a man of vast resources and power, was Roscoe Conkling of New York.

We have had two Presidents, and only two, in our history, who, having served two terms, could have been elected to a third (in the writer's opinion) had they desired it; they were George Washington and Andrew Jackson. We have had but one who is known to

have desired a third term, and that was Ulysses S. Grant.

But Grant is not supposed to have aspired to a third election until his friends led him to do so. It must be admitted, however, that he stated in a letter as early as 1875 that he did not desire a third term "any more than he had desired the first," which, being interpreted, means that, as he had accepted a first term without protest, it would not be difficult to induce him to accept a third.

Conkling, however, assisted by two powerful co-workers, Don Cameron of Pennsylvania and John A. Logan of Illinois, was at the bottom of the third term movement. This great triumvirate, each at the head of his State delegation, went to Chicago determined and confident. It is true the recent Grant enthusiasm had subsided when it was found that the general would again enter the arena for public honors. It is also true that a deep-seated anti third term prejudice must be overcome, for an unwritten law, hitherto unbroken, was that no man serve more than eight years in the great office. Nevertheless, these men felt confident, and they

went to the convention with the air of him that putteth off his harness rather than of him that girdeth it on.

### *The Chicago Convention*

The great convention met the first week in June. For some months before this meeting an exciting warfare had been going on in Republican ranks throughout the country in choosing delegates. So bitter was the contest between the friends of Grant and Blaine that many feared a reconciliation would be impossible even after the convention had made its choice. Scarcely a county in the country was free from this factional fight. The chief battle-grounds, however, were the State conventions. In many there was open hostility. In the Georgia convention each faction elected its chairman; both took the stage at the same moment and called loudly for order, but neither could be heard for the cries and yells of the dark audience. Similar scenes occurred in many States. Blaine was the choice of nearly all New England and of the Middle West. Grant's support came largely from the South, and from New York, Pennsyl-

vania, and Illinois. Had the people chosen freely and without dictation from the bosses, Blaine would have easily won. He was the popular choice beyond a doubt. He stole a portion of the New York delegation from Conkling, twenty-three from Cameron in Pennsylvania, and Grant's own State, Illinois, would have gone to him in a body but for the herculean efforts of Logan and Washburn. John Sherman, a third candidate, failed to hold the full strength of Ohio, several of the delegates openly declaring for Blaine.

The Grant forces were managed with far greater skill than those of Blaine. The nomination of the "magnetic man" would never have been doubtful had his generals in command been equal to Conkling and Cameron. But the Grant forces lost in the preliminary battle when the convention decided against the unit rule, thus permitting the stray Blaine men from Grant States to vote as they chose. A second blow to the Grant interests was a written statement signed by Judge W. H. Robertson and twenty-one followers, all delegates from New York, openly rebelling against Conkling's iron

rule and declaring that they would not vote for Grant. These two preliminary defeats proved fatal to the nomination of Grant, but they did not insure the nomination of Blaine.

After two or three days of sparring for position the convention was ready to receive nominations. Conkling himself placed his candidate before the vast assemblage in one of his masterly orations. "His polished blows at Blaine were as terrible as they were eloquent, and his epigrammatic tributes to Grant exhausted the power of language. . . . The speech was equal to Ingersoll's speech for Blaine in 1876 in eloquence and power."<sup>1</sup> He pronounced the name of Grant the most illustrious borne by any living man.

James F. Joy of Michigan presented the name of Blaine, but his effort was lifeless compared with that of Conkling. Next to Conkling's brilliant oration must be ranked the one delivered by James A. Garfield in presenting the name of John Sherman of Ohio. An incident occurred while Garfield was speaking that would scarcely be remembered but for the

<sup>1</sup> A. K. McClure in *Philadelphia Times*, June 6, 1880.



unexpected outcome of the convention. After the speaker had finished his exordium he continued, "But now, gentlemen of the convention, what do we want?" Here he paused, and a voice, clear and loud, rang out from the depths of the vast assemblage —

"Garfield."

A few minutes later the speaker, reaching another climax, said, "Therefore, gentlemen and brethren, we are here to take calm counsel together, and inquire what we shall do," and again he paused. Again arose the voice, clearer and louder than before, "Nominate Garfield."<sup>1</sup> This was followed by some applause, but the orator continued unperturbed.

On the first ballot Grant led with 304 votes, lacking 75 of enough to nominate him; Blaine followed with 284, Sherman had 93, Windom, Washburn, and Edmunds receiving many scattering votes. The second ballot was substantially the same as the first—but there was

<sup>1</sup> Many afterward believed the rumor that Garfield had hired the man who thus shouted. Sherman always believed that Garfield betrayed him in this convention, but there is no evidence of this.

one ominous vote for Garfield cast by a stray Pennsylvanian that Cameron had failed to gather within his fold.

For several days the balloting continued. The weather was hot; the people were weary. When would the end come? Thirty-three ballots were cast with no material change—Garfield receiving his uniform support—one vote, now and then augmented to two. Grant's vote had settled at 306, and here it stood like a solid wall.

On the thirty-fourth ballot, a break in the clouds was descried. Wisconsin cast 14 votes for Garfield, and the act was cheered. Garfield rose and protested that he was not a candidate, and that no one should vote for him. When the convention spoke again, Indiana followed the lead of Wisconsin and the Ohio man had 50 votes. Now there was a mighty surging, a general breaking up, a rush for Garfield. The Blaine men, the Sherman men, the Windom men, the Washburn men—all but the Grant phalanx of 306—made a dash for Garfield, and he was nominated on the thirty-sixth ballot.

The scene was now indescribable. The boom of cannon from without, the bands of music within, mingled with the wild huzzas of the multitude, and the uproar was deafening. Banners and flags were seized by willing hands and waved over the head of the new-made hero. Now he was called on for a speech, but he could not speak; he sat in his chair on the stage, dazed and speechless with emotion, and seemed as one awaking from a dream.

*James Abram Garfield*

Garfield was not the choice of the Chicago convention. Not a score of the delegates, perhaps, would deliberately have made him their choice for President. His nomination was an accident. The chances of Windom or of Edmunds or of Washburn would have been considered far better than his, when the convention met. But he became the dark-horse nominee, because he happened to be on the uppermost crest of the popular wave when the inevitable break came.

His nomination proved salutary to the party.

The politicians at first demurred; but the people rejoiced that the party was rescued from the threatening factional quarrel, and all were soon united for the success of the ticket, the Grant wing having been placated by the nomination of Chester A. Arthur of New York for second place.

The career of Garfield was a notable one. He had sprung from the commonest walks of life. His father was a plodding farmer, hewing his living from the sparsely settled forest of northern Ohio, where James was born in 1831. Two years later the father died. As the boy grew toward manhood he yearned for an education, and between the working hours—on the farm in summer, in the carpenter shop in winter, and occasionally driving the mules of a canal boat—he succeeded in preparing for college. Having taken a classical course, he became a professor and then president of Hiram College. In 1859 he was elected to the Ohio legislature, where he attracted attention by his eloquence and straightforwardness, especially when upholding the cause of the Union at the out-

break of the war. Soon after we find him at the front, leading a band of troops against the forces of secession. His most brilliant work on the battle-field was at Chickamauga, where he did more perhaps than any one else except General Thomas to save the Union army from rout. In the autumn of 1862 he was elected to the Lower House of Congress, and, thinking the war would soon be over, he resigned his commission in the army, and entered the legislative halls at Washington. Here he served for eighteen years without a break, representing the famous district that had for so many years been represented by Joshua R. Giddings. He steadily rose in the estimation of his fellows, until, in 1877, when Blaine was transferred to the Senate, Garfield succeeded him as leader of the party in the House. In January, 1880, Garfield was chosen by the Ohio legislature to a seat in the United States Senate; but, before entering on his new duties, he received the nomination for the presidency at Chicago.

Garfield was not great or brilliant; he was sturdy, honest, reliable. He did not excel in

social circles; as long as he lived it was not difficult to see that he was country bred. He kept himself thoroughly informed concerning the business of Congress. His industry was prodigious. No schoolboy could improve his time better or study more diligently than did Garfield. A little incident will illustrate. One day a friend came into his room and found Mr. Garfield deeply engrossed in a pile of books on his table. Seeing that all the books were about the Latin poet, Horace, the friend asked what it meant. "I find that I am overworked and need recreation," answered the Congressman. "My theory is that the best way to rest the mind is, not to let it be idle, but to put it at something quite outside of the ordinary line of employment; so I am resting by learning all the Congressional Library can show about Horace."<sup>1</sup> General Garfield, however, was wanting in one important respect as a statesman and a leader—he lacked will power. It was not difficult for him to stand among the foremost in advocating a party measure; but it was not in his fibre to stand

<sup>1</sup> *Philadelphia Times*, June 9, 1880.



out alone, and advocate a measure on principle. One of his cotemporaries, who was also his friend, has spoken of him as a "moral invertebrate." It is not strange, then, that when the new President chose a stronger man than himself for secretary of state, the latter should become the dominant force in the Administration.

### *The Closing Scenes*

The Democrats nominated General Winfield Scott Hancock, the hero of Gettysburg, to head their ticket, and William H. English of Indiana for second place. Hancock was an admirable character—not a statesman, but an ideal soldier, and the qualities of the soldier in those days appealed to the people more readily than anything else. Not even the Republican press attempted to find fault with Hancock. But the Democratic tidal wave of a few years before had greatly subsided, and Garfield was elected.

Garfield chose Blaine secretary of state. This was galling to the Stalwart leader of New York. Conkling had been deeply cha-

grined at Chicago, when the lifelong friend of his lifelong enemy received the nomination. He had supported the nominee, however, in a lukewarm manner, but now he was thrown into a belligerent mood at seeing Blaine made the head of the cabinet.

Blaine could not but feel a sense of triumph over Conkling. He had, on several occasions, expressed his willingness to be reconciled to his antagonist, but at heart he thoroughly disliked Conkling, and had no desire to be his friend. Conkling was bold and open in his antagonism; Blaine was wily and cunning, nor did he lose an opportunity to give the enraged lion a stealthy prod, making him roar the louder, and then turn to an inquiring public with, "What is he howling about?"

Blaine and Garfield had been close friends for many years. Fourteen years they served together in the House, and in all those years there had never even been a coolness between them. It is often said that two leaders in such a body cannot get on without quarrelling; and this was no exception to the rule, for only one was a leader — Garfield was a follower.

It was the most natural thing that now, in this higher sphere, the mind of Blaine would retain and increase its ascendancy over that of Garfield. Indeed, it might further be said that Garfield had reached the limit of his capacity in the House, while the capacity of Blaine had not yet been fully measured. There is an instinct in the lower animals that enables one to recognize a superior. The wolf is bold among sheep, but he skulks to his lair on meeting a tiger. This instinct is also found in men—except in the egotist who fails to properly measure himself.

President Garfield felt that Blaine was his superior; he also felt that the business before him was too vast for him,—especially since his party was rent in twain, and each faction more ready to make war upon the other than to hold up the hands of the President,—and he instinctively leaned on his great secretary of state. Blaine was a great man, but not too great morally to stoop to humble an old enemy when in his power to do so.

It is the custom for a President, in making local appointments in a State, to confer with

the senators and representatives of his party from that State, and, in a great measure, to be guided by their wishes. Garfield made several New York appointments that were pleasing to Conkling and his friends. But the President astonished the Senate and the country by the appointment to the most important office in the State of an open enemy of Conkling, and this without the knowledge or consent of the latter. He appointed Judge Robertson collector of the port of New York. Robertson was the man who had led the break in the New York delegation at Chicago and had voted for Blaine; nor did any one doubt that it was the secretary of state who now brought about his appointment to the collectorship. An appointment more offensive to Conkling could not have been made. He and his colleague, Thomas C. Platt, wrote a most vigorous protest, requesting, almost demanding, that Robertson's name be withdrawn. The President positively refused to withdraw it—that is to say, Secretary Blaine refused, for Garfield had no personal object in offending Conkling or in promoting Robertson.

Conkling's next move was to prevent the ratification of the nomination by the Senate. He used every means in his power to do this, but for once "senatorial courtesy" was suspended, and when Conkling saw that he could not accomplish his end, he and Platt resigned their seats in the United States Senate.

Both men expected to be triumphantly re-elected by the New York legislature, but it happened that there were some twenty Republican members of the legislature, led by Robertson himself, now president of the State Senate, who were unfriendly to Conkling and Platt, and, after many weeks of fruitless balloting, both were set aside and others chosen in their stead. Thus ended the public career of Roscoe Conkling. He never afterward appeared in public life. This factional quarrel between the Stalwarts<sup>1</sup> and the Half-breeds had now reached an acute stage, and the integrity of the Republican party was seriously threatened. Conkling had many friends in his own State

<sup>1</sup> The Conkling faction of the party were called "Stalwarts"; the faction to which Garfield and Blaine belonged were known as "Half-breeds."

and elsewhere who were deeply offended at his treatment by the Administration.

There was a man from New York claiming to be a lawyer and a "Stalwart of the Stalwarts," who took upon himself the task of reuniting the Republican party by "removing" the President. This irresponsible "crank," Charles Jules Guiteau by name, hatched a scheme within his own disordered and egotistical brain to assassinate President Garfield, apparently believing that this course would bring harmony to the distracted party and honor to himself. There was a gleam of the commendable in the man's motives, but the means he employed showed him utterly devoid of moral consciousness.

For six weeks the wily assassin lurked about the streets of the capital city awaiting his opportunity, his dastardly purpose known only to himself. One day when the President was leaving the city with Mrs. Garfield, who was ill, the ever watchful foe was ready to fire the fatal shot; his hand was on the trigger, but, as he afterward related, his heart failed him; Mrs. Garfield looked so weak and frail that he



could not shoot her husband in her presence. Again, he followed the President to church; but when about to fire, his hand stayed from fear that he might kill some one else. On several other occasions he lurked through dark streets and beneath the shadows of the trees watching for his victim. At length the opportunity came.

It was known throughout the city that the President would leave for a brief New England tour on the morning of July the 2d by way of the Baltimore and Potomac Railway. Garfield alighted from his carriage and walked to the ladies' waiting room arm in arm with Secretary Blaine. In the sparse crowd there was a middle-aged man of light, sallow complexion, hollow cheeks, and slender frame. He paced restlessly to and fro, looking furtively out of the window now and then with strangely glaring eyes. Now, as the President passed him he stepped forward, drew from his pocket a large-caliber revolver, took deliberate aim, and fired. The President turned quickly to see whence the report had come, when a second shot laid him fainting and bleeding upon the

floor. The crowd was struck with horror and indignation as they realized that a dreadful tragedy had been enacted before their eyes.

The bullet had entered the back to the right of the spine, had taken a downward course, and lodged in the body. The victim was laid upon a mattress by loving hands. His eyes were closed, he neither stirred nor spoke, and his face was deadly pale. At first it was believed that he would die within the hour; but presently he opened his eyes and said to a friend:—

“I want to send a message to ‘Crete’ [the pet name for his wife, Lucretia, who was absent]; tell her I am seriously hurt—how seriously I cannot yet say. I am myself, and hope she will soon come to me.”

The assassin Guiteau was instantly seized and taken into custody. He had a carriage waiting at the station, hired to take him to the jail. In his possession was found a paper written by himself before the tragedy. Its contents are plainly the product of a disordered brain. They are in part as follows:—

"TO THE WHITE HOUSE:—

"The President's death was a sad necessity, but it will unite the Republican party and save the Republic. . . . I presume the President was a Christian, and that he will be happier in paradise than here. It will be no worse for Mrs. Garfield, dear soul, to part with her husband this way than by natural death. . . . I had no ill will toward the President. His death was a political necessity. I am a lawyer, a theologian, and a politician. I am a Stalwart of the Stalwarts. I was with General Grant and the rest of our men in New York during the canvass. I am going to the jail.

"CHARLES GUTEAU."

Guiteau was kept closely confined until the autumn, when he was arraigned and tried for murder. The trial was long and apparently fair—but only apparently. The American people, especially the Half-breeds, were not only deeply saddened by the tragedy, they were wrought up to a high degree of anger, and demanded a victim. Threats of violence were not wanting against any juror who dared

cast his ballot for acquittal. But no threats were needed. The jury reflected public opinion, and Guiteau was promptly convicted and hanged. He should have been shut up for the remainder of his natural life in an insane asylum.

The stricken President hovered between life and death during the hot summer weeks. The Nation watched and waited and prayed. Messages of sympathy were received from nearly all the leading sovereigns of the world. At times it was believed that the famous patient would recover; but a few days of such hope were always followed by more depressing news. During the long struggle the President often conversed with friends; at times he was hopeful, then again despondent; he signed a few official papers, but was never able to raise his head from the pillow. Late in August he was removed from the White House to a cottage by the sea, but the benefit was slight and of short duration. One day the President in a feeble voice asked his friend, Mr. Swaim, "Do you think my name will fill a place in human history?" "Yes, a noble

one," was the answer, "and there is much yet for you to do." "No," was the response, "my work is done."

From this moment it was evident that the President had no hope of recovery. But the people still hoped on for two weeks longer, when the dreaded messenger came and claimed his own. It was on the 19th of September, near the hour of midnight, after a day of pain and extreme weakness, that the President awoke from a fitful slumber, and, placing his hand to his side, exclaimed, "Oh, Swaim, there is an awful pain there," sank back on his pillow, and expired. A few hours later—some time before daylight the following morning—Chester A. Arthur took the oath of office in his own house in the city of New York, and the chief magistracy passed into the hands of the Stalwarts.

The people had watched the hourly bulletins, and in grief and silence had learned to expect the worst; but yet they were shocked at the sudden news of the death of the President. The first shock soon gave way to reverent awe and silent resignation to the decree of God.

The dead President was taken to Cleveland, Ohio, the beautiful lake city near which he had been born and had always lived. Here, on a grassy mound overlooking the lake, whose waters now moan a perpetual requiem for the great dead, the body was laid to rest.



## CHAPTER XIII

### A CENTURY OF TARIFF LEGISLATION

THE period between the tragic passing of Garfield and the war with Spain presents no very striking features in our history, unless the constant agitation on the tariff question can be considered as such. Until the silver question temporarily pushed it aside, the tariff issue had been the most prominent political issue for more than a decade between the two great political parties, and it is deemed necessary, in carrying out the purpose of this volume, to devote a chapter to this important, but rather prosaic, subject.

A tariff is a tax imposed by a country on the exported products of its own people, or on the imports of foreign products; and as our Federal Constitution prohibits the laying of any tariff on exports, it is only with the latter we have to deal in this chapter.

In preparing this work we have carefully

avoided any discussion of living political issues from any partisan standpoint, nor shall this chapter furnish an exception to the rule. It is absolutely necessary, however, for the sake of those who may not have given the subject critical, dispassionate study, to make a few general statements on the subject in hand.

### *General Observations*

A tariff on imports may be levied for two purposes — revenue or protection, or for both combined. A tariff for revenue is intended to produce money, by taxing foreign imports, for the running expenses of the Government. If laid on goods produced in the country, as it sometimes is, it furnishes incidental protection. This method of indirect taxation is considered one of the easiest and most effective means of meeting the expenses of the Government. The tariff simply increases the price of commodities, and this increase is paid by the consumer when he purchases them. The great majority of consumers do not attempt to keep track of the tax by which the price of the various goods is augmented, hence they pay this tax uncon-

sciously. However desirable this method of raising money by indirect taxation, there is in it an element of injustice, deep and ineradicable, when it touches the necessities of life, as well as the luxuries, as it usually does. For example, a man has a large family to support from the fruit of his daily toil. In purchasing food and clothing for his family during a year he pays, say, fifty dollars more than their real value on account of the tariff. His neighbor, who is worth a hundred thousand dollars, but without a family of children, may not spend more for the necessities of life during the year than the laborer. Thus each pays the same as the other toward the expenses of the Government. Such a system is altogether unjust and inequitable, but as it operates without observation, it is in most countries a popular method of taxation. Of the hundred dollars paid to the Government by these two men the rich man should bear at least ninety-five. Any system that places a burden on the worthy poor that could easily be borne by the rich is unjust and unfair. The remedy may be found in taxing luxuries, used only by

the rich, and by direct taxation on property and incomes.

A few words now about protection. A protective tariff is a tax laid on imports that are also produced in the country laying such tax, and the chief object of it is to encourage home manufacturing by refusing the foreign producer the right to sell his goods on the conditions enjoyed by the home producer. If a protective tariff is not prohibitory, it not only protects, it also yields a revenue. A protective tariff is beneficial in nourishing young industries, especially in a new country. Many kinds of manufacturing require large capital at the outstart, and at first it may be impossible for them to compete with the well-established plants and cheap labor of foreign countries. It is here that the real benefit of the protective system is felt, and many an industry has been built up by the protecting arm of the Government.

But many people overlook the fact that the system is subject to the most flagrant abuse. This would not be so, if all men were just in their dealings with their fellow-men. Manufacturers are human; they have largely in their

hands the disposal of the benefits of protection, and it is certain that the laborer too frequently does not receive his rightful share. Many manufacturers raise the price of their products to the highest point that the tariff will admit, and then keep down wages even to the extent of employing foreign contract labor. If the products of labor are protected, why should not labor be protected by the same power? As an example of the evils of over-protection let us cite here an instance. Soon after the Civil War the great copper mines of Lake Superior began to be developed. These are the richest copper mines in the world, and in consequence the American people should have been supplied with copper at a lower rate than any other people, but just the reverse is true. Why? In 1869 the owners of these mines asked a higher tariff on copper while in truth no protection whatever was needed owing to the richness of the mines and the cost of transportation from other countries. Through the means of a powerful lobby they secured a very high tariff in spite of the President's veto. Whereupon straightway the mine-owners banded together and raised the price of

copper to almost double its former price. For many years thereafter the people paid two dollars, or very nearly, for every dollar's worth of copper they used. Where did the extra dollar go? Not to the Government, for the tariff was prohibitory and yielded no revenue: not to the workmen who operated the mines, for they received no higher wages than did railway employes and many others who are not protected by the tariff. It went into the pockets of the rich mine-owners—and so great was the yield of the mines that copper was actually shipped to foreign countries and sold at a lower price than in America! This alone proves that the American people were the victims of extortion. Why should a self-governing, intelligent people tax themselves so heavily on a widely used commodity for the sole benefit of a few multi-millionaires? Is this protection? The only imaginable explanation is found in the assumption that the people do not study the subject of protection critically. If lumber, for example, is highly protected by our tariff, what are the results? The wages of a few thousand lumbermen, a majority of whom are Ca-



nadians,<sup>1</sup> are doubtless a little higher than they would be otherwise, but the chief advantage falls to the very few millionaire owners of the forests. But there are other results. Not only are our forests depleted more rapidly than they should be, but the price of lumber is raised to a point much above its normal value, and this affects every man who builds or rents a house, or uses furniture or anything made of wood. As James G. Blaine said, "Whenever the frontiersman undertakes to make himself a home, he needs lumber for his cabin, for his fence, for his cart, for his plough. He needs lumber for almost every purpose of his daily life."<sup>2</sup>

Protection is truly a blessing if discriminately applied; but if not applied with discriminating judgment, it may become a burden grievous to be borne.

### *The First American Tariffs*

We now come to the main subject of this chapter—a brief survey of the tariff during our National period.

<sup>1</sup> Strange's "Farmer's Tariff Manual," p. 236.

<sup>2</sup> Speech in the House, June 10, 1868.

During the period between the Revolution and the adopting of the Constitution, the old Congress attempted more than once to lay a duty on foreign imports for the purpose of raising money with which to pay the Revolutionary debt; but under the Articles of Confederation no such measure could become a law without the consent of every State,<sup>1</sup> and in no case could this be secured. In 1782 a five per cent impost duty was proposed. Twelve of the States agreed to this; but one—Rhode Island—refused, and the whole project had to fall to the ground. Again the next year a desperate effort was made to relieve the financial situation by a tariff limited to twenty-five years. The time limit was attached in the hope that this feature would be an inducement to any reluctant State to join in the project. Twelve again agreed, including Rhode Island, but New York refused, and not a dollar could be raised by this means. But these fruitless attempts were useful in bringing about a new Constitution by showing the people how impotent was Congress in governing the country.

<sup>1</sup> See "Side Lights," Vol. I. p. 31.

No sooner had the new Constitution gone into operation than the people turned their attention to the deplorable financial condition of the country. The first important act of the First Congress was the enactment of the tariff of 1789, which was completed and sent to the President on the 4th of July, and soon after went into effect. No refractory State among the thirteen could now prevent this needful legislation, and it was not long until the financial condition was greatly improved.

This tariff of 1789 was exceedingly moderate compared with our tariffs of recent times. The average duty on dutiable goods was about eight and a half per cent. The highest duty, that on carriages, was fifteen per cent. The question is often debated as to whether this tariff was laid for revenue only, or for protection also. The great object of this tariff was to raise revenue ; but it is certain that it was meant for protection also, as stated in the preamble. The protective feature was fully debated at the time of its passage. The object of the protection aimed at, however, was not so much to foster new industries for their own

sake as to encourage the manufacture within the country of articles necessary in time of war. This is recommended by Washington in his first message to Congress. In 1792 Hamilton submitted a powerful argument to Congress in favor of protection, but it did not seem to have much effect on legislation, for the old duties remained with little change until the War of 1812. Of manufacturing in the United States, except home manufacture for family use, there was almost none until 1808, when suddenly a radical and permanent change was wrought. Our greatness as a manufacturing nation takes its rise from this date.

The change was brought about by the English Orders in Council and by the Milan and Berlin decrees of Napoleon, which forced the embargo; and this was followed by the non-intercourse act of 1809, which in turn was soon followed by the War of 1812. This series of events, which amounted to a prohibitive tariff, covered several years and became a twofold stimulus to domestic manufacturing. First, it brought about a dearth of commodities that had hitherto been imported; second, it set

free thousands of men along the seaboard who had been engaged in commercial pursuits. These commodities must now be made at home and these men must have employment, and it was not long until they were busily engaged in the new occupations. The manufacturing of cotton and woollen goods, of pottery, glass, and iron wares soon spread over New England, and busy workshops were to be found in every town and village.

By the time peace came in 1815 manufacturing had become an important industry of the people, and they called upon Congress to protect by tariff laws what had been protected before by the embargo and the war. This call was answered by the enactment of the tariff of 1816. This tariff raised duties generally to an average of about twenty per cent,<sup>1</sup> and, unlike its predecessor, the protective feature became the chief feature, and the raising of revenue was relegated to a second place. The protection afforded seems to have been ample, as the new manufactories continued to grow and flourish. The statement often made

<sup>1</sup> Taussig's "Tariff History," p. 19.



that this tariff was too low for protection and a want of higher duties resulted in the financial panic of 1818 seems without foundation. This panic came from other causes, the principal one being the natural reaction of the disturbed condition during the war and of the inflated currency incident on the reëstablishing of the United States Bank.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the cotton spindles in operation increased from 130,000 to 220,000 in the five years between 1815 and 1820 shows that the tariff could not have produced the panic.

It was about this time, however, that a protection wave swept over the country. All sorts of industries called upon Congress to protect them. Congress in response framed a tariff bill, increasing the duties very materially. It passed the Lower House, but was defeated in the Senate by a single vote. This was in 1820. The clamor for protection did not subside, and four years later a tariff known as the tariff of 1824 passed both Houses and became law. The duties were raised very considerably above those of the old tariff; those on cotton and

<sup>1</sup> Benton gives this view.



woollen goods from twenty-five to thirty-three and one-third per cent<sup>1</sup> while the duties on iron, hemp, lead, and many other articles were increased. This tariff was not a party measure, most of the leading statesmen, Clay, Adams, Jackson, Crawford, and others, favoring it.

It is curious to note that the North and the South changed places on the tariff question during the fifteen years following the War of 1812. The South at first favored protection, while the North advocated a low tariff or free trade. These conditions were exactly reversed before 1830. The cause of this gymnastic feat of the two sections is not far to seek. The South at first expected to work its own cotton and would have protection. But it was discovered that slave labor wanted the necessary intelligence to engage in manufacturing, nor could free labor flourish by the side of slave labor. The South, therefore, was forced to sell its raw cotton and to buy its manufactured articles, and with free trade it could buy them more cheaply than otherwise. Hence the

<sup>1</sup> This protection to woollens was partly offset by a duty of thirty per cent on raw wool.

change of doctrine. The North, on the other hand, especially New England, was first engaged in shipping and desired that commerce with Europe be as free as possible. But New England grew into a manufacturing centre and thus came to favor a protective tariff.

*The "Tariff of Abominations"*

In midsummer, 1827, a National convention of manufacturers was held in Harrisburg for the purpose of advocating a general increase of protective duties. About a hundred men were present, representing many of the States. They framed a tariff bill to be urged upon Congress, each manufacturer fixing the duty on his particular goods without regard to the interests of anybody else. This became a model for the tariff of 1828, known as the "Tariff of Abominations." In its passage, this bill was certainly an anomalous piece of legislation. A majority of the committee that framed it were opposed to high protection, and they fixed the rates ridiculously high on raw materials and on articles that needed no higher protection, on the supposition that the

protectionists in Congress would themselves be disgusted with it and defeat it. The object was to head off these ultra protectionists and prevent their going before the country as the only true friends of American industries, as they had done before.<sup>1</sup> But to the astonishment of all, the measure passed both Houses and became a law.

Following are a few examples of this "abominable" tariff: The duty on hemp, which before was thirty-five dollars per ton, was raised to forty-five dollars, with a further increase of five dollars each year until it reached sixty dollars. The better kinds of hemp are not raised in this country, on account of the great labor required in raising and curing it, and the object of this excessive duty was to embarrass the rope-makers and ship-builders. A duty was put on various farm products that were never imported. On pig-iron and hammered bar-iron the duties were greatly advanced, though no one had asked for such advances. The great object of the free traders was to "make the tariff so

<sup>1</sup> Taussig, pp. 88-89.

bitter a pill that no New England member would be able to swallow it," or if it should pass, as it finally did, to make protection unpopular and odious in the eyes of protectionists themselves.

In this they were partially successful. From this time forth, even to the present day, there has been a strong minority of free traders throughout the North. This tariff pleased no one and was in force but four years. In a new tariff act of 1832 many of the abominations were corrected. The duties on articles not produced in the United States were greatly reduced or entirely abolished. On dutiable goods the average rate was about thirty-three per cent.

### *Other Tariffs before the Civil War*

The tariff of 1832, though much more moderate than its predecessor, was not satisfactory to the South. The murmurs against it and that of 1828 were widespread in that section, and resulted in an ordinance of nullification in South Carolina. For several years the rumblings of a coming storm were heard

in that State, and in the autumn of 1832 it burst forth. The result was, not only the famous proclamation of Andrew Jackson, but also a compromise tariff agreed on by Clay and Calhoun and passed in 1833. As these two leaders represented the extremes of protection and free trade, both parties were brought to the support of the measure. This tariff dealt with all duties above twenty per cent and provided that they be gradually reduced for ten years, when the uniform tariff on dutiable goods would be twenty per cent.

For several years after this tariff became a law, the country had comparative rest on the question of protection. The tariff question had now become a political issue. In fact this had been the case as early as 1828, but party lines had not then been definitely drawn on that subject. But now Henry Clay, who had for some years been the leading protectionist of the country, became the founder and leader of a great political party, and as a matter of course this party shared his views on this great question. The Whig party got control of the government in 1841, and this

fact, coupled with the sudden drop of tariff duties the following year,<sup>1</sup> revived the old protection feeling. The Whigs in Congress were not long in making a response. Two months after the old tariff had reached its horizontal twenty per cent, the Whig tariff of 1842 went into operation (September 1). This again raised the duties on many articles to a very high rate. It "was a hasty and imperfect measure," as Professor Taussig says, "of which the details received little consideration."<sup>2</sup> Nor had it a "strong popular feeling behind it." But this tariff was short-lived. The Democrats, again coming into power, enacted a tariff known as the Walker tariff of 1846, so called because Secretary of the Treasury Walker practically framed it. This is one of the most famous of the American tariffs. It has been called the free-trade tariff; and its framer, Mr. Walker, was an avowed free trader. But it was moderately protective and changed many of the specific to *ad valorem* duties. It remained in force

<sup>1</sup> More than half of the ten years' reduction took place within the last year, 1842.

<sup>2</sup> "Tariff History," p. 113.



for eleven years when, owing to an excess of money in the treasury, the tariff of 1857 was enacted, lowering duties still further. After the Walker tariff had been in operation a few years it became popular with all classes, and at the end of ten years not a voice could be heard against it. Again the tariff ceased to be a partisan issue, all parties joining in the reduction of 1857. Senator Seward made the statement that "the vote of not a single senator will be governed by any partisan consideration whatever." This low tariff, enacted in 1857, was in force four years, when it was supplanted by the Morrill tariff on the eve of the Civil War.

From the various tariff acts and their operation before the Civil War the protectionists on the one hand and the free traders on the other have drawn much campaign material, the one side claiming that all the panics and depressions in business were caused by a low tariff, the other that these were caused by a high protective tariff, and that the only real prosperous times came when the duties were low. The fact is the country

prospered wonderfully during the forty years preceding the war, and the prosperity was equally great whether the tariff was high or low. There was an occasional brief season of depression, but it is impossible to say that the tariff had any effect in producing them. The two most serious panics occurred in 1837 and 1857, the one under a high tariff and the other under a low tariff. Calhoun claimed that the first was caused by the high tariff, Henry C. Carey claimed that it was produced by too low duties, while Henry Clay took a middle ground and averred that the tariff had nothing to do with bringing about this panic. The claim that the reduction of duties in 1857 brought about the panic of that year seems absurd when one remembers that the approach of this crisis was seen before the duties were reduced, and one of the objects of reduction was to avert it. A more profound and impartial student of the subject than Professor Taussig of Harvard could not be named; and he claims that it is not possible for any one to say what effect a high or low tariff had upon the

industries or the financial panics during this period.

*Later Tariff Legislation*

The temptation in treating this subject is to give also a general survey of the growth of our manufacturing industries, but the limits of this chapter forbid. Even our very important recent tariff legislation can be given only in brief outline. The Morrill tariff of 1861 aimed to restore the duties of the Walker tariff; it also changed many of them from *ad valorem* to specific, and went into effect but a few weeks before the firing on Fort Sumter. The difference between specific and *ad valorem* duties is slight as long as the price of goods remains unchanged; but the changing values of commodities renders them very unlike. A specific duty of twenty-five cents per yard on cloth worth one dollar is equal to twenty-five per cent *ad valorem*; but if, through the perfecting of machinery and other causes, the same cloth can be made for fifty cents, the twenty-five cents specific becomes equal to fifty per cent *ad valorem* duty. Thus the specific duty has always been favored by protectionists.

With the coming of the war, all former tariff theories were shattered. It was necessary to tax all the resources of the Government to carry on the great struggle. At the extra session in July, 1861, Congress began a series of tariff acts that continued for years. Scarcely a session passed but some duties were advanced. But twice, however, there was a general sweeping tariff bill passed. The first of these was in July, 1862, which raised the average of duties to about thirty-seven per cent, to compensate domestic manufacturers for the sweeping internal revenue act of the same month. The second was enacted in June 1864, and with it came the most drastic and sweeping internal revenue act the country ever saw. This tariff became highly protective. It "resulted in a most unexpected and extravagant application of protection, and made possible a subservience of public needs to the private gains of individuals. . . . Every domestic producer who came before Congress got what he wanted in the way of duties." <sup>1</sup>

Soon after the war was over, the internal

<sup>1</sup> Taussig, p. 166.

taxes, with few exceptions, were removed, and one would have expected that the high war tariff would have been correspondingly modified. But such was not the case. The protected industries demanded a continuation of the system, and this eventually became the settled policy of the country. In 1872 a general outcry, especially from the farmers of the West, against the high tariff resulted in the removal of the duties on many articles not produced in the country, and a ten per cent reduction on various home manufactured articles; but three years later, when the clamor for tariff reform had subsided, this ten per cent reduction was quietly repealed.

Other minor changes took place from time to time, but the next important tariff act was that of 1883. In accordance with a general demand for tariff reduction, there had been appointed a Tariff Commission, which was to report at the meeting of Congress, December, 1882. The tariff of 1883 grew out of this report, and was the first general tariff measure since the Civil War, except the horizontal reduction of 1872. This tariff pleased no one. It was an abortive



attempt at a reduction of duties; but while many duties were lowered on articles that needed no reduction, it actually raised them on articles such as woollen dress goods, where a reduction would have brought relief.<sup>1</sup> It was about this time that the tariff question became the dominant issue between the two great political parties, and the result was the enactment, in quick succession, of three of the most important tariff measures of the century, the third of which is still in force. Grover Cleveland was elected President in 1884 on a tariff reform issue; but as the Senate was still Republican, no important reduction could be made during the four years. The Mills Bill,<sup>2</sup> which did not become law, was simply an expression of party policy. As a similar party expression, the Republican Senate passed a bill advancing duties. Cleveland's famous tariff message in 1887 threw down the gauntlet again. The Republicans took it up, and the battle of 1888

<sup>1</sup>Taussig, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup>Even the Democrats did not propose free trade by any means. The Mills Bill was called a free-trade measure by its enemies; but its average of duties was about forty-two per cent, which is much higher than any antebellum tariff.



followed. Cleveland was defeated, and the Republicans took their success as a mandate from the people to raise the tariff. The McKinley Bill of 1890 was the result. This tariff marks a new departure in the history of protection. It not only surpassed all antebellum tariffs, it exceeded even the highest of the war tariffs in the rate of its duties. The average on dutiable goods was about sixty per cent, the details of which we have not space to notice.

But the people seemed to have received an overdose of protection, for in the ensuing congressional elections the Republicans were swept from power and the House became Democratic by a large majority. The Republicans explained by saying that the new tariff had not time to ingratiate itself with the people. But two years later the same thing happened. The Democrats swept the country, reëlecting Cleveland and gaining control of both Houses of Congress. This victory of the Democrats was now interpreted by them to mean that the people repudiated the McKinley Bill and desired a reduction of the tariff, and they proceeded to give them the

Wilson Bill. Even this tariff was by no means low. It reduced the McKinley duties about twelve or thirteen per cent on the average. How such a tariff — higher than was any of the war tariffs, higher, we believe, than that of any other protected country in the world — could be branded as a free-trade measure is difficult to understand. But so it was branded by the protectionists, and they appealed to the country and the country sustained them. In the National election of 1896 the Republicans won a victory as sweeping as that won by the Democrats four years before, electing their President and gaining control of House and Senate. Although the main issue of this campaign was the silver issue, it was the chief apostle of protection that won first prize, and the party was not slow to interpret their victory to mean a call for a return to high protective duties. The Dingley tariff was the outcome. By this the duties of the McKinley Bill were largely restored, the general average, however, being somewhat below those of that famous act. This tariff is still in force and there seems to be no immediate prospect of change.

The rapid fluctuations in our tariff legislation in the past decade would indicate that the American people scarcely know what they want. It is certain that a vast majority of the people have not given the subject thoughtful, intelligent consideration. They pay the tariff tax in the purchase of commodities, and concern themselves as little as possible whether it reaches the National treasury or the coffers of the millionaire. The Lead Trust, for example, enjoys a prohibitory tariff. It has raised the price of lead to the highest point that will not invite foreign competition. It not only supplies the country with lead, it also ships lead to foreign countries, and, after paying the cost of transportation, sells it at a lower price than in America. But who buys lead? Everybody. It is used in the manufacture of many articles that we all use every day, and the price of such articles must be higher accordingly. Where does the extra tax go? Not to the Government, for the tariff is prohibitory. It does not go to the employee. It goes to the Lead Trust, a soulless corporation composed of a very few rich men.

Protection is a salutary thing and its application has been beneficial in many instances ; but it becomes robbery when not applied with discriminating judgment, with justice, and in accordance with common sense.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SPANISH WAR

OF all great nations of the world ours is preëminently the nation of peace. From the time that President Washington took his bold stand for neutrality in the spring of 1793, we have adhered to our policy of standing aloof from the military and political broils of Europe. The year 1898 marks our first war with a European power except with the Power from which we won our independence. This war with Spain will doubtless take the name in history of "The Spanish War" in this country, while in Spain it will probably be known as "The American War."

In our limited space but a meagre outline can be given of this short but important war. It must be remembered, too, that the time has not come to write a critical history of this war. This must be done by the historian of the future. Our present chapter will aim to give

a condensed account of the military and naval movements, the causes and results of the war, leaving untouched the various personal controversies to which it has given rise.

*The Cuban Revolt*<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century almost all of South America and Central America belonged to Spain. But so oppressive and inefficient was Spanish rule that the inhabitants of the various colonies revolted against the mother country in the early part of the century, and, after a long struggle of ten years or more, won their independence. Cuba and Puerto Rico alone in the Western Hemisphere remained to Spain. The Cubans, however, have never been contented under Spanish government. In 1826 a revolt in Cuba was put down with a strong hand. A few years later another insurrection met with the same fate. In each case the leaders were executed. In 1850 and again in 1851 Narciso Lopez led an expedition against the island in the interest of the slaveholders of

<sup>1</sup> See also "Side Lights," Vol. I. p. 179.



the United States, the object being to wrest it from Spain, annex it to the United States, and thus extend slave territory. But the Cubans were not at that moment in a condition to join the invaders, and the movement met with disastrous failure, Lopez being garroted in the public square at Havana. During the following years the people of Cuba attempted by peaceful methods to secure from the Spanish Government some mitigation of their wrongs, but without success.

In 1868 a revolt against Spain, far more formidable than any that preceded it, broke out in Cuba. It was led by Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, assisted by Calixto Garcia and others, and was confined to the eastern shore of the island. The Spanish Government, although in the throes of a revolution at home, sent an army to put down the insurrection. But it was not successful and the war continued for ten years. The American people were deeply interested in the progress of the war, and our Government offered to put an end to the strife by purchasing the island; but Spain refused to sell it. In 1873 an event occurred

that led the Americans to take a more vital interest in the matter. The *Virginus*, an American merchant vessel, was captured by the Spanish man-of-war *Tornado* on the high seas near Jamaica, the ground being that she intended furnishing men and munitions for the Cuban insurgents. The captain and a number of the crew were shot. A war feeling in the United States soon rose; but the Spanish authorities were prompt to make ample reparation, and the matter was dropped. The rebellion continued, and Spain, after spending millions of dollars and finding herself wholly unable to suppress it, promised the Cubans the reforms for which they had fought. The insurgents accepted the offer and laid down their arms; but scarcely had they done this when Spain violated every promise and resumed the government of the island with the same tyrannical hand as before.

The matter now slumbered for thirteen years, during which Spain held the island in a condition of servitude by oppressive taxation and by sending over a vast number of carpet-baggers to hold the offices and grow rich by loot-

ing the natives. During all these years the people of Cuba were watching and waiting for another opportunity to rebel. In February, 1895, the storm broke forth more furiously than ever before. In half a year the insurgents had swept over the island from Santiago to the suburbs of Havana, and had taken possession of a large part of the island outside the cities and towns. The leader of the rebellion was the sagacious old general, Maximo Gomez, ably assisted by Garcia, who had made himself famous in the ten years' war, and by Maceo, the dashing young mulatto cavalry leader, who gave his life to the cause. The plan of Gomez was to avoid pitched battles, to harass the Spaniards by skirmishes and by ravaging the country so as to prevent their collecting the usual revenue. By this plan Gomez hoped to exhaust the treasury of Spain and win independence, or to bring about the intervention of the United States. In the one important battle of the war (Bayamo, July 13, 1895), the Cubans were successful and came near making Captain-General Campos a prisoner. Some months later Campos was

recalled by the Spanish Government and Weyler was sent in his stead. Weyler had already an unsavory reputation for brutality and corruption, and his brief reign in Cuba did nothing to redeem it.

A large portion of the Cuban peasantry remained quietly on their farms and took no part in the war. They were called "pacificos." To prevent these people from supplying the insurgent army with food, General Weyler issued an edict in the autumn of 1896 that the army forcibly concentrate this rural population into the garrisoned towns. This was carried out with heartless severity, and these poor people were thus driven from their homes at the point of the bayonet, and deprived of their only means of livelihood. Weyler was unable to feed them, nor would he permit them to earn their own living. What could they look forward to but starvation? In a few months their provisions were well-nigh exhausted; by the following spring the death rate was frightful. The Spaniards looked on with complacency; their object seemed to be to depopulate the island. Not Weyler alone, but the whole Spanish Govern-

ment, was responsible for this inhuman and savage measure. The Queen Regent of Spain, with all her intelligence and good qualities, set her hand and seal to this infamous edict. These Cubans, now called "reconcentrados," were perishing by thousands, and the voice of their blood cried out from the ground unto the civilized world.

### *Causes of the War*

It was now that our own people began to open their ears to this wailing cry from the neighboring island. Their sympathy was expressed in private and through public meetings called for the purpose, and eventually by the adoption of resolutions in Congress. But sympathy and resolutions could do nothing for the dying Cubans. There must be action. During the year 1896 there was a growing feeling on all sides that it was our solemn duty to send an army to the rescue of down-trodden Cuba, regardless of our friendly relations with Spain. President Cleveland hesitated. His responsibility was great. He was not oblivious to the demands of his countrymen nor to the cry of



distress from the unhappy island ; but his position led him to realize as no one else could that it is no light thing to disturb our peaceful relations with a great European nation — and he still hesitated. When, in the spring of 1897, Mr. McKinley succeeded to the presidency, his attitude toward the great question was very similar to that of his predecessor, and so it continued for more than a year.

Meantime, the American people were further exasperated by the seizure and imprisonment by the Spanish authorities of American citizens in Cuba. These, however, were released on the demand of President McKinley. When it was known that there were many Americans among the starving "reconcentrados," Congress voted \$50,000 by which to send them provisions. This was promptly carried out, and many of the Cubans, as well as Americans, were thereby saved from starvation.

In January, 1898, it was decided to send a battleship to Cuban waters to protect American interests, and the *Maine*, commanded by Captain Sigsbee, was selected for the purpose. The *Maine* was a stanch and beautiful armored



vessel of seven thousand tons burden, a battleship of the second class. On the night of the 15th of February, the crew was sleeping in fancied security, when suddenly there arose from the surface of the water a vast column of fire commingled with beams and rigging and the bodies of men, and accompanied by a sound surpassing the roar of artillery. The *Maine* had been blown to fragments, and 266 of her brave seamen had perished in the explosion. When, on the following morning, the news of the explosion was flashed across the country, the people were stunned and shocked, and the first thought was that it had been caused by Spanish treachery. Captain Sigsbee, who was one of the few to escape without injury, counselled that the people suspend judgment until the cause of the calamity be thoroughly investigated. A board of naval officers was appointed to make an exhaustive examination of the wreck, and discover, if possible, what had caused the explosion. For forty days they labored, and the American people waited in silence for the verdict. But the silence was ominous of a gathering storm, and when the board at length announced

that the *Maine* had been destroyed by a submarine mine, there was an outburst of wrath from one end of the land to the other.

The treacherous destruction of the *Maine* hastened the coming of war, but did not cause it. Let every American rejoice that this was not made the chief *causus belli*. Because, first, it could not be proved absolutely who caused the explosion, or that any one wilfully caused it. No one could doubt that that deed had been wilfully committed, but absolute proof was wanting. And again, the Spanish Government and people as a whole could not have been guilty; but even if they were, would it have been wise to wage war on that account? No amount of bloodshed would bring back our dead sailors. Such a war would be a war of revenge, and that is the ignoblest of motives. But one excuse could be found for such a war, and that is, it would teach Spain and other nations that our ships and rights must be respected. But that would scarcely be necessary, as the world already knows that we are able to take care of ourselves. If, therefore, the destruction of the *Maine* alone had been the

subject in dispute with Spain, it is probable that a demand on our part for suitable reparation, if properly heeded, would have ended the matter, as in the case of the *Virginius*.

But the old question remained unsettled. The Spanish army, unable to conquer the rebellion, continued its ruthless policy of starving the peaceful inhabitants. The people of the United States could endure it no longer. The President, still hesitating, was at last forced by public opinion to take the final step. On April the 11th he sent a message to Congress in which, after a careful review of the Cuban question, we find these words, "In the name of humanity, in the name of civilization, in behalf of endangered American interests, . . . the war in Cuba must stop." The message also stated that diplomacy had been exhausted, and the matter was turned over to Congress. This could mean war and nothing else, for Congress has no diplomatic relations; its only weapon in dealing with foreign nations is the war power.<sup>1</sup> This message was followed on the 19th by a congressional resolution declaring that the people of Cuba,

<sup>1</sup>"The War with Spain," Lodge, p. 36.

are and of right ought to be free, demanding that the Government of Spain at once relinquish its authority and government in the island, and empowering and directing the President to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call forth the militia of the several States, if necessary, to carry the resolutions into effect. / The resolutions also disclaimed all intention on the part of the United States to exercise sovereignty over the island, declaring that its government must be left to its people. /

The following day the President issued a proclamation declaring a blockade of the Cuban ports and allowing all neutral vessels thirty days to issue therefrom, and on the 25th Congress made the formal declaration of war.

### *Manila*

In addition to Cuba and Puerto Rico in the New World, Spain possessed in the Orient a vast and populous archipelago known as the Philippine Islands. This island empire had been discovered in 1521 by the dauntless Magellan in the most famous but one of all sea voyages. But the brave navigator did not live to

tell his story; he was killed by the natives before leaving the islands. Magellan had named the island group in honor of St. Lazarus, on whose day the discovery was made; but years afterward they were called the Philippines, after King Philip II. of Spain.

*begin* During the early months of 1898, when our relations with Spain became more and more strained and war seemed inevitable, the Navy Department issued orders to Commodore George Dewey to collect a fleet at Hong-Kong and hold it in readiness for instant action.

*omit* With great agility Dewey set about to obey orders. He purchased the English steamship *Nashan* with her thirty-three hundred tons of coal, and the *Zafiro*, filled with provisions and fuel. The *Baltimore*, with a great load of ammunition, the *Mohican*, and others, were sent to join the Asiatic squadron. The bunkers of all were filled with coal; provisions and ammunition were secured in ample quantities.// By the middle of April Dewey found himself in command of a respectable fleet of nine ships headed by his flagship the *Olympia*, and he waited quietly for further instructions. But he had not long to

*How*



wait; on the 26th a cablegram reached him from Secretary of the Navy Long. It was short and unequivocal. "War has commenced between the United States and Spain. Proceed at once to Philippine Islands. . . . Capture vessels or destroy. Use utmost endeavors."

So vigilant had Dewey been in making preparations that on the very next day the fleet began its long voyage of more than six hundred miles to the Philippines. For three days and nights the fleet ploughed through a boisterous sea, when we find it at the mouth of Manila Bay.

At the head of the bay and some twenty-five miles from the entrance is Manila, the capital of the archipelago. The city with its quarter of a million inhabitants lies low, not far above tide-water, is intersected by water passages, and has been called the Venice of the East. The bay of Manila is one of the most beautiful harbors in the world. Two small islands whose cliffs rise five hundred feet above the water stand like sentries at its mouth. On these and on the points jutting from the mainland were forts from which bristled great guns awaiting



the coming foe. At nightfall on April 30 Dewey's fleet was steaming as silently as possible through the channel into the bay. Every light was extinguished, and the moon rising from the eastern waters gave the ships the appearance of spectres as they crept into the harbor. All was silent except for the heart-throb of each vessel from its great engine beneath, and it was believed that they would pass the outer forts unperceived. But suddenly a shot from one of the shore batteries broke the stillness of the night, and this was followed by another and another. These were answered by several shots from the fleet which, however, was soon past all danger from these forts. All night long the fleet steamed silently, slowly — scarcely moving at times — up the bay toward Manila, when at the dawn of that tropical day — the ever memorable first day of May — the vigilant commander discovered at last the object of his search — the Spanish fleet. There it lay, close under the guns of Cavite, a small suburban town some miles from the capital. Nothing could now prevent a naval battle — one of the greatest in history.

A glance at the opposing fleets is here in order. [The American fleet consisted of nine vessels] two of which were supply ships and non-combatant, and a third the *McCulloch* a steel revenue cutter, was not engaged in the battle of May the 1st. The best ship of the fleet was the flagship *Olympia*, a steel cruiser of the first class and of nearly six thousand tons. Next to her came the *Baltimore*, the *Boston*, and the *Raleigh*, all second-class steel cruisers of about three thousand tons each. These all carried eight-inch guns and many rapid-fire guns of a smaller caliber. In addition to these were the two gunboats, the *Concord* and the *Petrel*.

[The Spanish fleet consisted of ten ships] the largest of which was the *Reina Cristina*, a second-class steel cruiser, as were also the *Isla de Luzon* and the *Isla de Cuba*. There were three iron cruisers, one wooden cruiser, and three gunboats. None of the Spanish ships could be compared in size and strength with the *Olympia*. [The two fleets were very well matched.] The Spanish ships were more numerous, but older and not equal to the American in strength or speed. Both fleets were equipped

with the best grade of modern guns, a slight advantage of numbers being with the Americans, who had fifty-seven big guns and seventy-four rapid-fire machine guns, to fifty-two of the former and seventy-two of the latter possessed by their opponents. Ten of Dewey's guns were eight inch, while the largest of the Spanish guns was six and two-tenths inch.<sup>1</sup> Dewey had the advantage in heavy guns and in the weight of metal, but Admiral Montojo, the Spanish commander, had the advantage in men, 1796 as against 1678 Americans. The advantage, on the whole, lay decidedly with the Spaniards on account of their support from the powerful shore batteries in front of Cavite.

When Dewey came into the immediate presence of the enemy he was fully prepared for action. He determined on immediate battle. After making a detour toward Manila and leaving the supply ships out of range, the American ships steamed slowly and with grim determination toward the enemy. The Spanish guns began to open on them as they approached, but without replying they moved steadily and

<sup>1</sup> "The War with Spain," Lodge, p. 64.

silently until they came within five thousand yards, when Dewey said to the captain of the *Olympia*, "If you are ready, Gridley, you may fire." A moment later an eight-inch shell sped across the still water to the Spanish flagship. A little later the order to open with all the guns was answered by one broadside after another from the American ships as they swung round in a half-circle before the enemy. A terrific fire was poured forth at the same time from the Spanish fleet and forts. Again and again the American battle-ships swept round in a grand graceful curve, each time nearer the enemy than before, each time pouring forth a deadlier fire. In the midst of the action the Spanish flagship, the *Reina Cristina*, steamed away from her fellows and made directly toward the *Olympia*. Dewey instantly concentrated the whole fire of his fleet upon her. The *Reina Cristina* was dreadfully torn; she halted and swung round to flee from that awful raking fire when an eight-inch shell from the *Olympia* penetrated her stern, tore her deck to splinters, and exploded one of her boilers. The wounded vessel was barely able to stagger back to the

forts with two hundred and fifty of her crew dead or wounded upon her shattered decks. A Spanish gunboat followed the example of the *Reina Cristina* with still more fatal results. After being terribly raked with American shells, she was struck in the centre by a great projectile, broken to pieces, and sunk to the bottom with all on board.

Five times did the American fleet swing past the enemy, each time doing more deadly work than before. At the end of the fifth round, when the battle had raged for two hours, an erroneous cry of a lack of ammunition for the five-inch guns led Dewey to withdraw his fleet to a safe distance on the other side of the bay, knowing that the remnant of the Spanish fleet could not escape, and that the work could be completed at a later hour.

The Spaniards, believing that the Americans had been driven off, set up a shout of victory, and the news was flashed beneath the sea to Madrid that the Americans had retreated to land their dead and wounded.<sup>1</sup> But imagine

<sup>1</sup>This misleading cablegram was the first news of the battle to reach America.



the astonishment of Dewey and his captains to find that not a man on the fleet had been killed or wounded! Several of the ships had been struck, but none disabled or seriously injured. This was certainly a marvellous showing. It was now but little past eight o'clock, and the crews sat down and leisurely ate their breakfast. The decks were then cleaned, the guns examined, and fresh supplies of ammunition brought up. Three hours were thus consumed when, at eleven o'clock, the order came to proceed to Cavite and complete the terrible work of the day. (The steam whistles shrieked and the crews cheered as again the great leviathans moved to their task of destruction.) They swung round as before, the *Baltimore* in the lead. Not a shot was fired in answer to the Spanish volleys until they came within three thousand yards, when the *Baltimore* opened a withering fire on the half-wrecked *Reina Cristina*, which was soon shattered to fragments, and she sank to rise no more. Still another was sunk by the *Baltimore*. Another was blown up by the *Raleigh*, several were set on fire by the *Petrel*, and so the work of destruc-



tion went on until the entire Spanish fleet was utterly destroyed. Admiral Montojo had abandoned his flagship for a gunboat, which he managed to steer to shore, whence he made his escape by land to Manila. The shore batteries continued to fire, and Dewey now addressed his attention to them. In a surprisingly short time they were destroyed by the unerring marksmanship of the American gunners, ran up the white flag — and the battle of Manila was over.

The victory was one of the most brilliant and complete in the history of naval warfare. The Spaniards had lost every ship and six hundred and thirty-four men killed and wounded; of the American fleet not a ship had been seriously damaged, not a man had been killed, and only eight wounded, all on the *Baltimore* and mostly from flying splinters. Whatever explanations and causes may be named of the thoroughness of the victory and the striking disparity of the casualties on the two sides, they may all be summed, as far as human elements entered into it, into one, and that is the superiority of the American character over the Spanish. The Spaniards thought the ma-

nœuvring of the American ships in making those great curves was a sign of weakness and exhaustion, and indicated a readiness to retreat, and they even wired this conviction to Spain. But the fact is, every movement was planned beforehand and had its origin in the brain of Dewey.

The battle of Manila ended the three and a half centuries of Spanish misrule in the Philippine Islands; it directed the attention of the Orient as nothing had ever done before to the vast and growing Power beyond the Western Ocean; it brought to one man immortal fame. What a strange thing is fame! Many toil a lifetime for it and then it comes—to somebody else. Dewey was long past middle age. His ambition to win fame, if he ever had any, must have been greatly dulled ere this. Before this remarkable sea-fight he was known only to his friends and in naval circles. The great public had never heard of him. In a day he became a world hero, and his fame is of the kind that will endure. When our times become ancient history, Dewey will be remembered as one of the greatest of naval commanders.

*Santiago*

The battle of Manila was the first great action of the war, but before it had occurred operations had been commenced in Western waters. Immediately on the declaration of war Admiral Sampson, who had been waiting with his fleet at Key West, was ordered to proceed to the harbor of Havana and to begin the blockade that had been proclaimed by the President. On April the 27th Sampson from his flagship the *New York*, supported by the *Puritan* and the *Cincinnati*, bombarded the fortifications at Matanzas. In a few hours the works were torn to pieces. The Spaniards had returned the fire, but every shot fell short of its mark. This was the first action of the war. Meantime the President's call for 125,000 volunteers was being filled with remarkable rapidity. Thirty years and more had passed since a call to arms had been heard in the United States; it now went forth like a clarion note to every corner of the Union, and the response was scarcely less marvellous than when the ancient prophet's call brought forth an army

from the valley of dry bones. From the family circle, from the workshop and counting-room, men hastened to heed the country's call, and but few weeks had passed when a formidable army was collected at Tampa, Florida, awaiting further orders. Crude and untrained these soldiers were, for the most part, but in personal valor and in love of country no army ever surpassed them.

While these men waited eager and impatient to measure swords with the Castilian, the country was held in painful suspense by a two-fold subject—the whereabouts of the Spanish fleet under Admiral Cervera and the welfare of the *Oregon*. The *Oregon* was one of our noblest battle-ships. At the beginning of March she was lying off the coast of California and was ordered to join the Atlantic squadron. On the 19th she started on her long voyage around Cape Horn. A glimpse of her was had when she stopped to coal at Callao and a few other places, when she was again lost to the world. But half her great voyage was completed when war was declared, and her fate now became a subject of the greatest solicitude.

The fleet of Cervera represented Spain's sea power, and was much more formidable than that which Dewey destroyed at Manila. It consisted of four new first-class armored cruisers, the *Colon*, the *Oquendo*, the *Vizcaya*, and the *Maria Teresa*, three large torpedo boat destroyers and a few smaller vessels. The fleet had left Cape Verde Islands and was now somewhere in mid-ocean. Many were the speculations concerning Cervera's destination. One theory was that he would suddenly appear in north Atlantic waters and harry the New England coast; another was that he was attempting to intercept and destroy the *Oregon* in her long and lonely voyage. A third theory was that Cervera was steaming for Cuba or Puerto Rico with the object of giving battle to the American fleet. At least it was fully believed that the Spanish admiral had a definite aim, and that his purpose was to strike an effective blow at some point.

Admiral Sampson with his ill-assorted fleet watched and waited for his antagonist; he steamed to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and bombarded the city, seriously damaging the forts.



At last Cervera made his appearance in the Western Hemisphere. After touching at a few of the West Indian ports, he led his fleet into the harbor of Santiago de Cuba. It was afterward found that his fleet was not in good condition, his guns were not of the best modern type, and, above all, he had had no definite plan in crossing the Atlantic, but had drifted vaguely and aimlessly, scarcely knowing whither he was going. Here at least he found a safe retreat, for no hostile fleet could enter the harbor, strewn with mines as it was.

At length the *Oregon* arrived safe and sound off the coast of Florida on May the 24th. Her voyage had been a great one. In a little over two months she had covered fourteen thousand miles—more than half the circumference of the globe—ploughing through summer seas, encountering the gales of winter, pushing on and on at fourteen miles an hour, until she reached the scene of war without a “a rivet or a bolt or a gearing broken or out of place.” All honor to her valiant commander, Captain Clark.

Cervera was caught like a rat in a trap. When it was known positively that his fleet



rested in Santiago harbor, Commodore Schley was ordered to proceed with his flying squadron to the mouth of the harbor, and prevent the escape of the Spanish fleet. Schley, after some days of needless delay, had the Spanish admiral effectually bottled in the harbor and without a possibility of escape except by fighting his way out. Schley was soon joined by Sampson, whose fleet had been augmented by the now famous *Oregon*.

Santiago harbor, seven or eight miles in depth, is so narrow at the mouth that scarcely a hundred yards of water lie between the bold promontories, one of which was crowned with Morro Castle, with its bristling cannon, while the entrance in the bay was strewn with dangerous mines. Admiral Sampson conceived the plan of sinking a vessel across this narrow channel to prevent the more surely the escape of the Spaniards until the American army could coöperate with him from the shore. The *Merrimac* was chosen for the purpose, and the project put into the hands of Lieutenant Richmond P. Hobson, a young naval constructor of great energy and ambition.

On the evening of June the 2d, Sampson lined up several hundred men on the deck of the *New York*, told them of the intention to sink a vessel under the fire of the Spanish guns, and called for volunteers to go on the mission from which it was believed none would return. He then ordered all who were willing to go to make one step forward. Every man before him stepped forward.

What an exhibition of American valor! From these Hobson chose seven men,<sup>1</sup> and by three o'clock on the morning of the 4th, the little crew were steaming up the channel on their perilous journey. Suddenly a stream of light from Morro Castle flashed upon them and showed that they were discovered. Then broke forth the peals of artillery, and the shells fell thick and fast about the devoted crew. Hobson stood in the pilot-house in the midst of the storm and viewed the night battle in all its terrific grandeur. He now coolly lowered the anchors, blew up the bulkheads, and the vessel sank. The little crew clung to their small

<sup>1</sup> The names of the men who went with Hobson were Phillips, Kelly, Deigman, Charette, Montaque, Murphy, and Clausen.

boats, escaping the Spanish fire in the darkness. At the coming of daylight they were picked up unhurt by the Spanish admiral, who was lavish in praise of their gallantry. After some weeks of imprisonment in Morro, they were exchanged and returned to their own lines. The deed attracted the attention of the world. It was certainly one of the most daring in history, and deserves to be classed with the most renowned in the annals of song or story.

Let us now leave the navy for a moment and take a glance at the operations of the army. President McKinley's call for 125,000 volunteers in April was supplemented by another call a month later for 75,000 more. While the response to these calls was most gratifying, our system of army organization was thoroughly bad, owing to the narrowness of Congress, the reign of the politician, and the endless coils of red tape to be encountered, and many were the delays and blunders before an army ready for the field could be formed of this crude material. After some weeks of confusion an army was formed and an expedition against Santiago

under the command of General Shafter was planned. At last, on June the 14th, after what seemed endless waiting in the broiling sun, an army of 15,000 men embarked at Tampa harbor for the enemy's country. Not a large army indeed, but the largest American army that ever embarked upon the sea for the invasion of a foreign country. The army was landed at Daiquiri, sixteen miles south of Santiago harbor, and the difficult task of marching to Santiago by way of two mountain trails was begun. Generals Wheeler and Young led the regulars, while Colonels Wood and Roosevelt led a very irregular band of cavalry known as the "Rough Riders." These Rough Riders, five hundred and thirty-four strong, were a motley crowd. Most of them had come from the far West, hunters, pioneers, cowboys, and ranchmen, who were used to hardships; about forty were full-blooded Indians, while a hundred or more of this strange regiment were young men from the most highly cultured families of the East—graduates of Yale and Harvard, members of the most fashionable clubs of New York and Boston. This regiment of

Rough Riders was by far the most effective volunteer regiment of the war.

Leaving the main part of the army behind, these two columns pressed forward over the mountain passes. Their first fight was at Las Guasimas, and began soon after they started. As they pressed up the hillside through the underbrush in the intense heat, they suddenly heard volley after volley of Mauser bullets singing above their heads, but they could see no enemy. Some fell in their tracks, dead or wounded; the others pressed on until at length the enemy, in spite of their smokeless powder, came into view. The Americans rushed forward, firing as they ran, until they carried the ridge, and the Spaniards fled. The fight of Las Guasimas was won. The American force numbered nine hundred and sixty-four, the Spanish about two thousand. Of the Americans, sixteen were killed, eight of whom were Rough Riders, and fifty-two wounded in all. The Spaniards lost two hundred and sixty-five in killed and wounded. That night the Spanish soldiers said at Santiago: "Instead of retreating when we fired, the Americans



came on. The more we fired, the more they advanced. They tried to catch us with their hands." In this battle Captain Capron, a brave and promising young officer, was among the slain.

A few days later, the rest of the troops under Generals Lawton and Chaffee having come up, it was decided to make an attack on El Caney, a village northeast from Santiago, strongly fortified by a fort and block-houses. The assault was made on July the 1st, soon after daybreak, with about six thousand men. It was a valiant charge indeed, and showed the true American spirit. But the guns of the battery were few and inadequate, while the powder used was black powder, the smoke of which soon revealed the besiegers to the enemy, who, using smokeless powder, found it comparatively easy to remain concealed. Had Congress done its duty and supplied the army with smokeless powder, many a brave American who fell that day would still be with us. Slowly and steadily for seven or eight hours the attacking party closed in around the fort. The Spaniards



within, less than a thousand in number, had no possible means of escape, and they fought with the bravery of desperation. Late in the afternoon the walls of the fort began to crumble, and General Chaffee ordered that the works be taken by storm. The men made an impetuous dash up the hill, and began to scale the walls. The Spaniards, what were left of them, instantly fled, some escaping, many being taken prisoners. The fort was strewn with scores of dead bodies, and among them were the bodies of the commander, General Vara del Rey, his two sons, and his brother. The American loss in killed and wounded reached almost five hundred. No other engagement of the war proved so destructive to the Americans as this action at El Caney.

On the same day San Juan, a suburb of Santiago, was taken by a most brilliant and daring assault led by Colonel Roosevelt. Valiant charges were also made at other points by Generals Kent and Hawkins.

The terrible fighting around Santiago on July the 1st (and continued into the next day) consisted of several separate engagements

which as a whole have taken the name of the Battle of San Juan. It far surpassed any other land battle of the war. General Shafter has been severely criticised for not having had any definite plan, and for not properly supporting the infantry with artillery. In view of these facts, the victory achieved by the Americans was little short of marvellous. The infantry, unsupported by artillery, carried heights and blockhouses and captured batteries in a manner that astonished military critics throughout the world. The entire American force engaged was about sixteen thousand men, two hundred and forty-one of whom were killed and nearly fourteen hundred wounded. The Spanish army did not perhaps exceed ten thousand men, but they had the great advantage in being strongly intrenched; yet their losses exceeded the American losses.

Now, briefly, let us turn to another scene that followed hard on the Battle of San Juan, and that riveted the world's attention in a still greater degree. Admiral Cervera had lain with his fleet in Santiago harbor for five weeks. He was restive and anxious to escape, especially

when he saw that the city of Santiago was about to fall into the hands of the enemy, and believing the besieging force to be much greater than it was. Cervera therefore made a dash for liberty, — a brave, desperate, and fatal dash. It was on the morning of July the 3d, at half-past nine, when some one on the deck of the *Iowa* descried a thin column of smoke far up the bay and apparently moving toward the entrance. The cry was soon raised that the Spanish fleet was escaping, and presently one after another of the vessels issued from the mouth of the harbor and turned westward, at the same time opening a terrific fire upon the American ships.

It happened that Admiral Sampson had an appointment to meet General Shafter that morning at Siboney, and at the moment when the firing began was four miles away with his flagship, the *New York*. Wheeling his vessel about, he hastened back with all speed, but his presence was not needed. The battle was well-nigh over when he reached the scene of action. Admiral (then Commodore) Schley, being second in rank, had general charge of

the battle. But, more strictly speaking, it was a captain's fight, as each commander, knowing just what to do, managed his own vessel as seemed best in his eyes. A written standing order had been pasted in every conning tower to close with the enemy if he attempted to escape. Schley now reiterated this order, and the American vessels, which had been cleared for action for a month, bore down on the Spaniards as the latter emerged from the harbor.

The battle was short, decisive, and dreadful. It was a repetition of Manila. Few of the Spanish shots took effect, and after the first few broadsides the gunners were swept from the decks by the unerring aim of the Americans; and the Spaniards could do nothing now but hasten their speed in their desperate flight for life. At first they gained slightly, owing to the fact that the American ships were under low steam; but this obstacle was soon overcome, and the awful race became a death-race. The American marksmanship was fatally accurate. Within an hour of the opening of the running fight the *Maria Teresa* was a burning wreck, having been destroyed by a thirteen-

inch shell from the *Indiana*, and the *Oquendo*, with her rigging torn to fragments, was also a burning mass. The *Vizcaya* survived a little longer, but only to meet a similar fate. The two torpedo boats, emerging last from the harbor, were thought to be able to escape, owing to their high speed; but they were set upon by the *Gloucester*, lying in wait with her deadly rapid-fire guns, and in twenty minutes both Spanish vessels, torn and shattered to pieces, found their bed on the bottom of the sea. As the two Spanish boats were ready to sink, the men of the *Gloucester* nobly and gallantly leaped upon their decks to save their crews. They succeeded in saving forty-five out of one hundred and thirty-four; the rest found their grave on the ocean's bed.

But one of the Spanish fleet now remained above the water, the *Cristobal Colon*, which had got outside the fighting line and was making a heroic effort to gain the open sea and escape. But the *Brooklyn* and *Oregon* gave chase, gained rapidly on the fleeing vessel, and about one o'clock opened fire with their great guns. The *Colon* soon struck her colors and surrendered;



but the Spaniards had headed for the shore, and opened her sea-valves so that she sank in shallow water.

Thus ended the great sea-fight of Santiago. It reminds us forcibly of the battle of Manila. Several of the American vessels were repeatedly struck by Spanish shells, but none seriously injured. One man was killed and one wounded, both on the *Brooklyn*. The Spaniards lost everything. The killed and drowned numbered three hundred and fifty while one hundred and sixty were wounded and nearly eighteen hundred taken prisoners. The Americans prevented a further loss of life by leaping upon the burning decks of the sinking ships and saving as many as possible. The completeness of the American victory astonished the world, and added to the proof already given that the Spaniards are a degenerate and broken people and utterly incapable of competing in battle with a stanch and virile race; yet the despairing courage they displayed was truly heroic and excites our admiration.

Two weeks after this battle the city of Santiago was surrendered by General Toral to General Shafter, and the city and surrounding



district, and practically the entire island of Cuba, passed into the hands of the United States.

### *Puerto Rico*

Puerto Rico, the smallest of the four Greater Antilles, and about half the size of the State of New Jersey, lies a thousand miles southeast from the coast of Florida and half as far from the eastern extremity of Cuba. It is a link of the great island chain that separates the Caribbean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean. The interior of the island is mountainous and heavily timbered, and the mountains are belted along the coast with lowlands of grassy meadows and blooming gardens. The soil is exceedingly fertile and the climate perpetual summer. The population, numbering almost a million, is a strange mixture of Spaniards touched with Indian blood, negroes, and a sprinkling of Europeans.

Of all the vast possessions of Spain in the New World at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Puerto Rico alone, besides Cuba, remained to that country after the great political upheaval in Central and South America.

Scarcely had our war with Spain opened when the Americans began to look wistfully to this beautiful island, this tempting morsel of the sea, and but a few months elapsed till an expedition was planned for the conquest of the island.

The campaign in Puerto Rico was short, nor was there any great battle fought; yet measured by its results it was one of the most important of the war. The expedition was put into the hands of General Nelson A. Miles, who had distinguished himself in the Indian wars of the far West and who was known to be an able and daring commander. He embarked at Santiago with about thirty-five hundred men on July the 20th, and six days later made a landing at Ponce, a city of forty thousand population, the largest city of the island, situated on the southern coast. Part of the troops had already landed at Guanica. The surrender of the city was immediately demanded with the threat of bombardment in case of refusal. As the Spanish forces had fled and the property owners advised a surrender, but few hours elapsed until the American flag was waving over the port.

The next step was to move the troops along the great road from Ponce to San Juan, the capital of the island, capturing the various towns along the way. The first objective point was Aibonito, some thirty-five miles from Ponce, where two thousand Spanish troops were awaiting them. General Wilson led this expedition. Before reaching Aibonito he came to Coamo, a village with a blockhouse held by two hundred and fifty Spaniards, and captured the place after a sharp skirmish lasting an hour, in which six Americans were wounded. The army pushed on toward Aibonito. It first encountered some outlying batteries, and fierce firing resulted in the killing and wounding of several men on each side. A demand for surrender being refused (August 12), the Americans with high spirits were planning a movement to force the surrender of the city — when lo! the news came that the peace protocol with Spain had been signed, and all hostilities had to cease from that moment. While these movements were in progress two other expeditions, planned by General Miles, were operating in other parts of the island. First General Brooke was ordered to proceed

with a body of troops to Guayama, a considerable coast town thirty-five miles east of Ponce; but scarcely had they landed and made ready to open fire on the Spaniards when everything was brought to a standstill by the news of the peace protocol.

Second, a formidable expedition was sent under General Schwan against Mayaguez, a large town on the western coast of the island. On August the 9th the troops left Ponce, and soon reached their destination. The fighting before Mayaguez in the intense heat of the sun was very severe. The Spanish forces were about equal in number to the Americans, and they knew the ground and were on the defensive, but they were unable to stand before the fierce attack of the latter. The American troops had full possession of the town on August the 11th, and a body of men were immediately sent in pursuit of the fleeing Spaniards, who, turning on their pursuers, gave battle and were again defeated. General Schwan pressed on with unwearied toil and would soon have captured Lares in the interior and Arecibo on the northern coast, when the

whole movement was stopped by the unwelcome news of the peace protocol.

Still another expedition, on a smaller scale, under General Stone, operating in the western part of the island, was brought to a standstill in the same way.

Thus all the various movements in Puerto Rico came to an end with shocking suddenness. Had they continued their operations for two or three weeks longer, there is little doubt that the entire island would have been overrun and taken possession of by the American soldiers. While there were no great battles fought in Puerto Rico, the perfect plan of the campaign, the vigor and energy of the American troops, and their unbroken successes in an unknown region against superior forces, reflect great credit on General Miles and his little army.

### *The Coming of Peace*

The war had been in progress a trifle over three months; a large part of Cuba and of Puerto Rico had been captured by the Americans, and they were still pressing onward and winning victory in every encounter; Spain's

naval power had been swept from the seas, and now an American fleet under Commodore Watson was preparing to sail direct to Spain and open a bombardment on the coast towns, — such was the condition at the beginning of August, 1898, and so hopeless was the outlook from the other side of the Atlantic that poor old Spain, with all her boasted chivalry and pride, was forced to sue the young Republic for peace.

The request for peace came from Spain's minister of state through M. Cambon, the French ambassador at Washington, and reached the President on July the 26th. But few days elapsed when Secretary of State Day made answer that the President was anxious for peace and would gladly open negotiations on the following conditions: that Spain relinquish forever her sovereignty over Cuba, that Puerto Rico and an island in the Ladrones be added to the United States as a war indemnity, and that the control of the Philippines be determined later and embodied in a treaty of peace. The terms being accepted, a protocol stating the three conditions in exact terms was prepared and signed by the two governments



on August the 12th. This ended hostilities as soon as the news reached the belligerents in the field. It was only a truce, but it proved to be the end of the war.

X Arrangements were immediately made to frame a treaty of peace. The American commissioners appointed by the President were Secretary Day, who resigned his position in the cabinet, Senators Davis of Minnesota, Frye of Maine, Grey of Delaware, and Mr. Whitelaw Reid of New York. The Spanish Government appointed an equal number with the president of the Senate, Don Eugenio Montero Rios, at the head. These men met at Paris on October the 1st, and sat till December the 10th, when the treaty was completed.

We have not the space to dilate on the debates and wrangles of this commission. The one serious question that had to be disposed of was the ownership of the Philippine Islands. Dewey had taken Manila just before the news of the peace protocol reached him, and the American flag now waved over the city. Public opinion was much divided as to what should be done with the islands. It was plain that

Spain was utterly unable to govern them. It was equally certain that they were incapable of self-government. Should they then be left to themselves and become a prey to wrangling European powers? It was therefore decided by the American commissioners that the only thing for the United States to do was to assume the responsibility of the government of the islands and to retain them as an American possession. This demand was therefore made and laid down as necessary to the treaty of peace.

The Spaniards yielded with ill grace; but, as there was nothing else to do, they yielded, accepting twenty million dollars for the archipelago. The treaty was ratified by the United States Senate in February, 1899, the month that marked the first anniversary of the destruction of the *Maine*, after considerable opposition in that body, and by the two governments in April, which marks the anniversary of the opening of the war. The year was a momentous one indeed in the life of Spain and the United States. It had brought vast and, in their effects, incalculable changes to both.

The war was not a great one measured by

many others, but in its results few wars have been so important as this one. It marked an end of Spanish dominion in the Western Hemisphere. It did more; it marked the downfall of Spain as an empire, as a world power. Three hundred years ago Spain was the greatest nation of Europe or the world. Philip II. ruled not only Spain but Portugal, the Netherlands, the Milanese, and the Sicilies. He was master of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and almost all of Central and South America. His revenue was ten times that of Elizabeth of England, says Macaulay. But alas for Spain! With all her chivalry and her national pride she was wanting in the virtues so essential to national longevity. The government of her colonies was one of unceasing corruption and plunder, and her home government was scarcely better. The canker soon began its work. The empire began to crumble. For three centuries the work has been going on; the empire has fallen to pieces little by little, and the war of 1898 completed the downfall.

But, after all, this war may prove a great blessing to Spain. Her people, now hemmed

within the limits of their own peninsula, have no colonies to excite their cupidity or invite corruption, and, being no longer a first-class power, they have little temptation to boast or to wage war. If now they will give their attention to the arts of civilization, to the education of the masses, to the weeding out of corruption from their government, they may yet become a great and happy people.

The change that was wrought in the United States by this war was still greater. During the century and a quarter of our national history we had remained in comparative isolation from the rest of the world. While other nations were reaching out and acquiring new possessions in various parts of the earth, we have been content to develop our resources at home; and in so doing we have grown into a vast power, of wealth and strength untold. This war with Spain was the occasion, not the cause, of our expanding into a world power. It was a movement of world forces, as uncontrollable as destiny, which no man can foresee or shape. It brought to us an expansion of power, of influence, of opportunity, of responsibility. This expansion has come, not

that any man planned or foresaw it, but because it was time for it to come — because our light could be hid under a bushel no longer — because the Ruler of the nations intended that no longer should our influence in self-government, in popular education, in religious freedom, be confined to our own bounds. But the increased responsibility that comes to us is great. Similar responsibilities have come to others in the past — to Egypt, to Israel, to Persia, and to Rome of the ancient world — and to others in later times. But none of them proved worthy of the great trust ; each one ran its course and fell into ruins. Nor is the cause far to seek. It was —

“Wealth, vice, corruption, and barbarism at last”

that rendered their “history with all its volumes vast” capable of being crowded into one page.

Our future as a nation rests with ourselves. There is no natural limit to a nation’s life. If we are swayed by “wealth, vice, and corruption,” nothing under heaven can prevent our downfall as a nation ; but if we cultivate, above all things, national and individual integrity and virtue, there is no reason why this great country of

which we are so proud should not endure, under its present form of government, "as long as the earth remaineth, and seed-time and harvest and summer and winter and day and night shall not cease."





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